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THE

LIFE AND CORRESPONDENCE

OF

CHARLES, LORD METCALFE,

22376

BY

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AUTHOR OF "THE LIFE OF SIR JOHN MALCOLM," "HISTORY OF THE WAR IN AFGHANISTAN," ETC.

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THE LIFE OF LORD METCALFE.

CHAPTER I.

[1823—1825.]

LEAVING HYDERABAD.

Illness of Charles Metcalfe—Death of his Brother—Correspondence with Dr. Goodall—Visit to Calcutta—Dr. Nicolson—Return to Hyderabad—Improvements in the Deccan—Invitation to Return to Delhi—Letters of Lord Amherst and Mr. Swinton.

In the autumn of 1823 the friends and correspondents of Charles Metcalfe—both those who wrote to him publicly and privately on grave affairs of state, and those who addressed him only in the language of personal affection—were disquieted and alarmed by a suspension of those communications from Hyderabad which had before been received with such unbroken regularity. They could not account for his long silence. Some there were who thought that they had offended him, and wrote warm-hearted letters to ask what they had done to incur his displeasure. But after a while there came tidings to Calcutta that sickness had fallen upon the Hyderabad Resident. His wontedly strong health had yielded at last to a distressing malady; and in the midst of the physical sufferings he had endured, he had been unable to write to his friends.

Early in this year he had received the melancholy tidings of the death of his brother Theophilus. The Baronet had gone to England in failing health, but with the intent of returning again to China. His constitution, however, was irremediably broken down, and neither the climate of his native country nor the medical science of the western world could stay the inroads of fatal disease. For some time he resided in Wimpole-street, but the excitement of London life was considered prejudicial to him, and he retired to the pleasant quietude of his paternal estate at Fern Hill. But the mortal malady which was destroying him had made such progress as no human means could resist; and on the 14th of August, surrounded by all the female members of his family, he resigned himself into the hands of his God.

By Charles Metcalfe this blow was severely felt. It came upon him, too, at a time when the painful contentions of which I have spoken in the last chapter were at their height—when he was harassed and depressed, and little in a condition to bear the imposition of new burdens. To his brother he was, indeed, tenderly attached. The severance of other links which had bound him to his home had strengthened these fraternal ties. After the death of their parents, Theophilus had often written to his brother about those pleasant days to come, when, both settled in England after years of well-requited toil, they might share the old family mansion in Portland-place, and visit each other at their country-seats. And now these bright day-dreams, like others which had gone before them, were displaced by a sombre, cheerless reality. And people, when they addressed Charles Metcalfe, wrote *Sir* before his name.*

And many letters with this superscription poured in to

* The second baronet left one daughter, subsequently married to Sir Hesketh Fleetwood.

remind him of his sorrow—to remind him, but not ungratefully, of the change that had taken place; for they were letters of kindest condolence. Few men had so many friends as Charles Metcalfe; and as he sympathised from his inmost heart in all their sorrows, so their sympathy with him was genuine, now that he in turn was afflicted. If anything could have lightened the burden which oppressed him, some relief would have been found in all these demonstrations of ardent friendship.

Among other letters of condolence which he received at this time was one from his old friend and tutor, Dr. Goodall, now Provost of Eton. They had corresponded at intervals for nearly a quarter of a century, and had lost none of their pristine interest in each other. But Metcalfe *major* and Metcalfe *minor* had been among Goodall's favourite pupils. Their portraits graced the walls of that wonderful room in Goodall's cloistered home where many a privileged young Etonian has marvelled over the contents of the good doctor's curious museum.* He had sat beside the sick-bed of the elder brother at Fern Hill, and now he wrote to

* I find a pleasant allusion to this circumstance in one of Dr. Goodall's letters, written a few months before Theophilus Metcalfe's death. Speaking of an "Oriental matchlock" which Charles had sent him, the worthy doctor says: "It at present acts as a kind of hyphen, connecting the lower extremities of two portraits—one of his Excellency, residing at Hyderabad, the other of the Prince of Pekoe and Hyson, late of Canton, but now of Wimpole-street. Most unluckily, he came down to Beaumont Lodge, when I was totally engaged in our audit, at which seasons, from ten in the morning until bedtime, I have not a spare moment; the day being devoted to accounts and college business, and the evening to collegiate gourmandising. Alas! that his health should still be so delicate! I almost wish that he would say, 'China, farewell for ever!' In the course of a few days I hope to make another effort to see him in town, and shall hope to persuade him to pass some little time with us before I repeat my visit to the continent."

the younger, to condole with him on his loss, thus offering his meed of consolation :

"Little," he said, "did I think, when I sat by the bedside of your dear brother at Fern Hill, that I should so soon, so very soon, be called to the melancholy duty of accompanying his remains to the grave. I thought, indeed, that he was dangerously ill; but from his calmness, nay his cheerfulness, though I witnessed one sad paroxysm of pain, I was encouraged to expect that, at all events, he would not be snatched from us so soon, and ventured even to indulge a hope that medical skill might still restore him to a state of comparative health and comfort. That it pleased the Almighty to extinguish these expectations and hopes, however his dearest connections might lament at the time, and I should trust would furnish less reason for regret, when from the testimony of his medical attendants, his continuance in this vale of misery must have been only a series of protracted sufferings. That he breathed his last resigned to the will of his Creator, beloved and lamented, and surrounded by his nearest connections of that sex whose tenderness and affectionate ministrations are best calculated to soothe the anguish of disease and blunt the shafts of even the acutest pain; and it must have been no slight consolation, even in the bitter hour of his being torn away from them, to know that to the goodness of heart, the kindness, the integrity, in a word, to the character of their brother, all who knew him bore honourable testimony."*

Not long after the receipt of this letter Metcalfe was lying sick and suffering—wanting the ordinary consolation of confidence in his medical advisers. "——, I believe, thinks I am recovering," he wrote briefly from Bolarum, on the 9th of October, to a young friend, "of which I do not myself see any satisfactory symptom. I am much as I was—well enough for a day or two, then attacked as before. In short, I am not sensible of any certain progress towards recovery; but —— is content, so I suppose I must be." On the 9th of November he wrote again, still from the same place: "I do not get on so well as I could wish. I had yesterday another attack of ague and fever, the result of an experiment which failed." Two days after-

* Further passages from Goodall's Correspondence are given in the Appendix.

wards he wrote again: "I am not as well as I could wish to be, and make no progress. I was three weeks ago as I am now." These were brief, hurried notes, addressed to a very dear friend, written obviously under great debility of body and depression of spirit. He was capable of nothing more.

In the meanwhile, the Calcutta friends of Sir Charles Metcalfe—and they were many—had heard of his lamentable situation, and were bethinking themselves how to afford him relief. The health of such a man was not a matter of mere private concernment; it was an affair of state. Lord Amherst had by this time succeeded to the chief seat in the Government of India. John Adam had embarked for England, utterly broken down in health—alas! only to perish on the way. Mr. Fendall was senior member of Council; and Mr. J. H. Harrington was his colleague. At the head of the Secretariat was Mr. George Swinton, who had well and worthily supported Metcalfe throughout all the great contentions at Hyderabad, and who was among the warmest of his friends. In the highest official places the tidings of Metcalfe's illness caused extreme inquietude; and there were many others, who—regarding him not as a public servant whose loss would be a national calamity, but as a beloved friend whose equal they had never known—looked eagerly towards those high official quarters for the aid which was so much required.

And they did not look in vain. On the 31st of October Mr. Swinton despatched a hasty note to Hyderabad, informing Metcalfe that it had been "determined to send the Government yacht with a medical man to Masulipatam without delay, to be at his disposal." Mr. Fendall had obtained the ready sanction of Lord Amherst to the proposed arrangement,* and Commodore Hayes had received

*. I believe that this suggestion emanated from Metcalfe's friends Mr. Henry Wood, of the Civil Service, and Major Sneyd, of the Body-Guard.

orders to make the necessary preparations for the despatch of the *Nereide*. And in the meanwhile, Colonel Casement, the Military Secretary, was instructed to apply to the Medical Board to select a competent medical officer to proceed in the yacht to Masulipatam, to render assistance to the distinguished patient.

The selection, however, was not primarily made by the Board. At that time, as for many years afterwards, the highest medical authority in India was Mr. Simon Nicolson. He was a gentleman of great professional experience, extensive scientific acquirements, a mind well stocked with general literature, and of such kindliness of heart and suavity of manner, that sickness lost half its terrors when he stood by the bedside. There was a healing power in his very presence—in the blended wisdom and gentleness of his speaking face—and the first word of assurance that he uttered. People came from remote places to consult him; and when they could not make their way to the Presidency, they sought his advice, through the medium of friends, from a distance. His practice was only limited by the impossibility of performing more than a certain amount of work within a certain space of time. At all hours of the day, and at all hours of the night, his horses were in harness and his coachmen were on the box. There was one carriage always waiting at his door ready to replace another in the day-time, as the exhausting climate incapacitated man and beast from further service; or to whirl him away in obedience to some nocturnal summons. But for all this he never grew rich. The penniless subaltern (Gods knows I have reason to say it) had his unremitting care as freely as the wealthiest member of Council.

When Metcalfe's friends heard that he was sorely smitten and in great suffering, their first thought was to "go to Nicolson." "I trust that you have written to Nicolson," wrote George Swinton to his sick friend. "In

all complaints of that nature he has wonderful skill and experience; and I dare say, had you been under his hands, you would have been well in a week. Nothing is new or extraordinary to him; and what your medical men would consider such would be much otherwise to him."* Captain Sneyd had already gone to Nicolson and obtained not only his advice, but a parcel of surgical appliances, "new and extraordinary," perhaps at Hyderabad, which Swinton sent off by express; but more important still than this, Nicolson now recommended a young medical officer acquainted with his system, in whose talents he had unbounded faith, as the fittest delegate to Hyderabad. He recommended Mr. James Ranald Martin—then a young assistant-surgeon of some six years' standing—and the selection was confirmed by the Board.

On the 7th of November the yacht was despatched, and reached Masulipatam a week afterwards. Metcalfe was then at Bolarum, making preparations for the journey to the coast. "My friends at Calcutta," he wrote on the 16th, "have taken alarm at my illness, and got the Government yacht despatched to Masulipatam, with a medical man to attend me. Although I did not think of going, and was better than I had been, I do not mean to throw away this opportunity, as the sea voyage and Nicolson's advice together may effect a perfect cure. Wells and Bushby are going for fun." Wells and Bushby were young civilians, Metcalfe's assistants. The one found an early grave at Delhi, the other died thirty years afterwards, in the seat of his old master, Resident at Hyderabad. They followed Sir Charles for something better

* Almost every new invention, especially such as was auxiliary to professional science, found its way into Nicolson's library before other people had heard of it. His agents in London had *carte blanche* to supply him with everything of the kind.

than "fun;" they followed him for love. They petitioned him to suffer them to accompany him, and what they sought was not denied.*

The *Nereide* landed Mr. Martin at Masulipatam, and he pushed on with all speed to Hyderabad. Three marches from the city he came upon the Resident's camp. An hour after his introduction he had rendered Metcalfe essential service. The young surgeon found that his patient was thoroughly versed in the literature of his case. He had perused the works of almost every writer who had discoursed on the nature and treatment of his disorder, and, as commonly happens in such cases, he had been bewildered and perplexed by the multitude of conflicting authorities. Commenting freely on this incertitude, he asked his attendant how it happened that amidst such varying counsel he was able so promptly to decide. The answer was, of course, the answer of the profession—and a

* They literally "petitioned" him; and as their petition, written in a style of serious playfulness, is honourable to all parties, I willingly insert it here:—

"DEAR METCALFE,—We, the undersigned, have determined that we will waive the Nizam's allowances, and cleave to the Company, in order that we may both show our loyalty to our employers and enjoy the pleasure of accompanying you to the Presidency of Calcutta.

"Albeit, we the undersigned humbly pray that you will vouchsafe us the following boon on this occasion, without which it would be both demonstrative of want of consideration and selfishness in us to depart with you, viz.:—

"If you were to go alone you would not keep an establishment. If you take us with you, you propose to keep an establishment. Your petitioners humbly pray that you will not put yourself to this expense, and that you will live with your friend Captain Sleyd, and trust to our finding house-room in his neighbourhood—either by the hire of a small domicile or otherwise—for which boon your petitioners will ever pray.

'J. A. BUSHBY.
'R. WELLS."

just one. Metcalfe soon perceived that Government had sent him the right man.

After a few days spent at Masulipatam, where Metcalfe, invalid as he was, felt constrained not to reject the hospitality so freely offered to him, the Resident and his family embarked for Calcutta, which they reached on the 21st of December. In spite of the entreaties of his young assistants, and the hearty invitations of Mr. Swinton, Captain Sneyd, and other old friends, he determined on instituting an establishment of his own. Taking a large house in Chowringhee—the May-Fair of the City of Palaces—and purchasing the furniture, to be sold again at a heavy sacrifice, he made a home for himself and his friends. His happiness was principally derived from the contemplation of theirs; for in spite of the science of Nicolson and Martin, he was not able at first to cheer his friends at a distance with any flattering accounts of himself. At the end of January he wrote, however, that he believed he was on the high road to recovery; and before the end of the following month he was on the eve of returning to Hyderabad.

This brief sojourn in Calcutta was little likely under such circumstances to evolve incidents worthy of narration; but there are two little facts connected with his departure so illustrative of his delicate sense of honour and his extreme generosity, that they ought not to be withheld. Sir Charles Metcalfe was anxious that Mr. Martin should return with him to Hyderabad, and assume the office of Residency Surgeon, which was about to become vacant. The appointment was one of honour and emolument. The old incumbent had drawn about 3,000 rupees a month. The offer, therefore, seemed to be a tempting one. But Mr. Bushby, through whom it was made, was directed to inform Martin, that one-half of this large salary was paid by the Nizam—the Residency

Surgeon being called Medical Storekeeper to his Highness, though in reality there were no stores to keep. This, one of many instances of the "plunder of the Nizam," Metcalfe had determined to stop, with every other that came within his control, on the first opportunity. And much as he desired to induce Martin to accompany him to the Deccan, he now intimated to his young friend that he could not consent to perpetuate so nefarious a job. The result was, that the young surgeon's friends, looking forward to his eventual prospects in Calcutta, persuaded him not to accept the appointment; and soon afterwards he accompanied the Body-Guard on the expedition to Rangoon.

So Metcalfe embarked for Masulipatam, in this matter disappointed. On his voyage down the Hooghly he learnt that a friend and brother civilian—an officer then of the highest promise, since abundantly fulfilled—had embarked for England on a vessel then dropping down the river, but owing to some untoward accident, had not contrived to ship his baggage. All the mighty wardrobe necessary for the consumption of a five months' voyage was lagging behind on some dilatory luggage boat, and the ship was fast putting out to sea. The dilemma was an extreme one. Both horns of it well considered, the least excruciating of the two appeared to be a return to Calcutta—the loss of the passage, and, perhaps, of the furlough. But Metcalfe came to the rescue. He had large supplies of clothes with him—many of all kinds, newly made for him in Calcutta—and he rejoiced now to think of the good account to which they might be turned. Keeping barely sufficient for his own immediate uses, he now sent the bulk of his wardrobe to his perplexed friend, who went on his way rejoicing not the less for the thought that he was nearly a foot taller than the Lord-Bountiful of Hyderabad.

The hot weather and the rainy season of 1824 found

Sir Charles Metcalfe at the Residency in improved health and spirits, but with an ever-increasing mass of business before him. He had enjoyed none of the leisure he had sought; but in the growing conviction of the benefit that accrued from his labour, he found abundant compensation for his toil. From time to time, however, he contrived to snatch brief intervals for private correspondence; and there were cherished friends with whom an unreserved epistolatory intercourse was among the choicest pleasure of his life. From letters of this kind, written in the autumn and winter of 1824, some passages may not unfitly be given, in illustration of his inner life at this time. Characteristic as they are in other respects, they indicate nothing so distinctly as the exceeding warmth of the writer's heart. Friendship was with him almost a passion —"passing the love of women." And the same romantic attachment which he felt towards others it was his privilege also to inspire in them:

"*Hyderabad, 25th Oct.*, 1824.—You must already, I fear, think me a very unworthy correspondent. I know not how it has happened that, since you went, I have found so few opportunities for writing. I never had a greater inclination for it, but day after day passes away, and is filled up, somehow or other, without giving one the happy moment for indulging in friendly converse with those absent, whom our thoughts nevertheless accompany. I cannot say that the happy moment is now come legitimately, for a swelling packet of the works of Sutherland, Campbell, Baxter, and Co., encumbers my table, and carries the imagination away from anything that it is delightful to dwell on; but I have seized the moment by the forelock, and dragged it in advance of its own turn, which, if it waited for others, might never come. I am no longer able to read in the morning up-stairs. The time is now occupied by business: from which I steal a little now to confabulate with you. I have not been *quite* well for a few days. —— gave a grand party in tents. I got a little wet from rain before the carriage could be closed, in going there; and I tasted from curiosity some of his productions of milk punch, orange wine, &c. Whether it were the one or the other, I was attacked

with some symptoms of derangement afterwards, in the seat of last year's illness, accompanied with slight fever. I am, however, well again now, and matters have reverted to their usual course. . . . . I shall not quarrel with your view of your own imperfections; because every man, on examining himself, if I may judge from my own self, must, I conceive, be sensible not only of weaknesses and frailties, but of corruption and wickedness, which it is perhaps the most arduous endeavour of his life to subdue. I do not desire you to entertain an exalted opinion of yourself, for that is in itself a vice, and a very unamiable one. Have as low a sense as you like of your own merits. No ill can follow from true humility. But I am now an old man compared with you (though I mean to start fresh in England as a promising young man), and, in virtue of my years, I have seen and observed characters; and can tell you, that I have found in yours much to esteem, love, and admire, much far beyond your age. You speak of vanity. No one is without it. It is, perhaps, a necessary ingredient of our composition. It is only offensive when it is obtrusive."

"*October* 28, 1824.— . . . . . Your inquisitive friend, the Killadar of Beder, expressed, I dare say, the interest universally felt in the Burmah war, or any other convulsion in which we have a chance of being worsted and driven from our high seat of empire. You will find Gibbon much more entertaining than Hallam; though the latter is very much admired. I went through Gibbon during a sickness which confined me to my room at Eton, and thought him delightful from beginning to end. That, however, was twenty-five years ago, and I know not how I should like the same thing now. In your fondness for reading you have a sure hold on one of the greatest sources of happiness in life. There are few sorrows in which a book is not some relief; and with a taste for reading, one never needs any other pleasure or employment."

"If I thought it would have any effect, I should beg you, for my sake, as well as your own, to adhere to your plans of rational economy. If ever I am to leave India, I shall go with great reluctance and heart-sinking, if I leave those I love behind, without the hope of meeting them again in my old age. I shall quit Hyderabad—if that evil day is to come—with similar feelings; for God knows what will become of us all when our little circle shall be broken up. Though I do not pretend to be insensible to the honour of a seat in Council, and the possible result of such an appointment, I should rejoice at the nomination of some other

person, to put out of credit those rumours which I am told are on the increase in Calcutta regarding my elevation to that dignity, and on which the realization would remove me from the present home of my affections, and the ties formed in this sphere. I cannot think on this subject without pain, knowing as I do by experience that separation and removal to distant scenes, though they may leave unimpaired good-will, regard, esteem, friendship, confidence, and even affection, are still fatal to that warmth of feeling, that intimacy of ideas, that delight of close and continual intercourse which constitute what I would term the luxuries of friendship."

"*Hyderabad, November*, 7, 1824.— . . . . If my epistles give you as much pleasure as yours bring to me, we shall both enjoy a great deal of happiness from our correspondence. The natives of the East say that the interchange of letters is 'the meeting of hearts.' They say it formally, and without feeling its force; but it is nevertheless a good saying. Hearts undoubtedly meet hearts in correspondence. How the heart rejoices and bounds at the sight of the handwriting of a beloved friend! and how it overflows with delight, how it warms, expands, and boils over, in reading the affectionate language which one knows to have been poured forth from a congenial heart! There are joys of this kind in the pure love which exists between man and man, which cannot, think, be surpassed in that more alloyed attachment between the opposite sexes, to which the name of love is in general exclusively applied. Alas, that these joys should be of such short duration; and that experience should teach us, that although we may indulge in them for a period, they are but a dream, and will pass away! The day will come—and it is impossible to say how soon—when you will receive my letters with indifference, and sit down to answer them with reluctance. This, too, may happen without any loss of esteem, or regard, or friendship, in its ordinary sense. All these may remain, and yet the enthusiastic warmth of attachment which gives its principal zest to the affection of friends may subside. Such is human nature. And if it were not so we should never know new attachments. The first formed would be the only ones existing through life, and the heart would be closed against all others. I will not, however, anticipate evil, but enjoy and cherish the present good."

"*December* 17, 1824.— . . . . I feel the want of a country house incessantly. As long as I live at the Residency it will be a public house; and as long as the billiard-table stands, the Resi-

dency will be a tavern. I wish that I could introduce a nest of white ants secretly, without any one's kenning thereof, if the said ants would devour the said table, and cause it to disappear. But I do not like, either in deed or word, to make any attack on an instrument of amusement which is so much relished by some of us, who do not observe the consequences to which it leads. —— is almost as ardent at it as ——, and is quite animated on a day of 'pools.'

. . . . "I have no intelligence respecting the talked-of seat in Council, and retain all my doubt on that subject. It is a thing on which there can be nothing certain until it be accomplished. I cannot pretend to reject such an ostensible rise in life with disdain; but my heart is bound by ties and feelings to this quarter, and I shall be rather glad than sorry to see the chance ended by the nomination of some other person. You are yourself no slight cause of my reluctance to go away."

In the early part of 1825 the Resident set out on one of his wonted provincial excursions, glad to be absent from Hyderabad. In the course of his tour he endeavoured to find a convenient place for the erection of a country residence—but I know not with what result. The object of escape from the Residency was soon to be attained in another way. From the letters written during this excursion, one or two extracts may be made. In the following will be found the earliest mention I have been able to trace of the freedom of the Indian press:

"*Camp Bhoungeer, March* 2, 1825.—Many thanks for your letter of the 21-24th ultimo. Have I read 'Adam Blair?' I am not sure whether I have or not; but I suppose not. The story is familiar to me; but I must have got my knowledge of it from reviews. The last thing I did with the book was to lend it to Mrs. B——, the clergyman's wife. Is it one of Galt's? I rather think not.* We have got his last, the 'Spae Wife,' in camp. It is a highly poetical and elegant thing, though not of the same sort with your favourite, 'The Annals of the Parish,' the simplicity of which is beautiful, and in parts very affecting. Strange to say, I have never read 'Tristram Shandy;' I know very little of Sterne

† It need scarcely be said it is Lockhart's.

as an author. I took up 'Tristram Shandy' when I was twelve or thirteen. I thought that I did not understand it, and laid it down again. Since fourteen or fifteen I have read very little, excepting the publications of the day.

"It seems that the directors have tried to nominate Sir J. Malcolm Governor of Madras, but have been prevented by the Board of Control, who have put a veto on the appointment, because he is a Company's servant. Malcolm's speech on the press was, I think, very good. I have no decided opinions on that subject myself. I cannot go along with one party as to the blessings of a free press; nor with another as to its dangers; but I rather think that the inconveniences would predominate at present, and the advantages hereafter; and that it would be hostile to the permanency of our rule, but ultimately beneficial to India.

"The real dangers of a free press in India are, I think, in its enabling the natives to throw off our yoke. The petty annoyances which our Governments would suffer I call rather inconveniences. The advantages are in the spread of knowledge, which it seems wrong to obstruct for any temporary or selfish purpose. I am inclined to think that I would let it have its swing, if I were sovereign lord and master."

But interesting as is this passage, as an indication of his earlier views on a great question, his practical solution of which was among the greatest measures of his public life, the following is more interesting still, for it contains the solution of a still greater question:

"*Camp Kohair, March* 21, 1825.—If I am really the happy man you suppose me to be, I will tell you, as far as I know myself, the secret of my happiness. You will perhaps smile, for I am not sure that your mind has taken the turn that might induce you to sympathise. But be assured that I am in earnest. I live in a state of fervent and incessant gratitude to God for the favours and mercies which I have experienced throughout my life. The feeling is so strong that it often overflows in tears, and is so rooted that I do not think that any misfortunes could shake it. It leads to constant devotion and firm content; and though I am not free from those vexations and disturbances to which the weak temper of man is subject, I am guarded by that feeling against any lasting depression.

On the 11th of April, Metcalfe wrote still to the same correspondent, "Here we are, my dear boy, on our return towards Hyderabad, from the western extremity of the Nizam's dominions;" and soon afterwards he announced his arrival at Hyderabad: "Since we came in," he wrote on the 6th of May, "you can guess in what way I have been bothered—public business and private correspondence have accumulated and remain undisposed of. I have not read a word, though the contents of eleven cases of new books have been spread out before me." In this letter he had great tidings to communicate. He was about to leave Hyderabad for ever. He had returned to the Residency only to receive from the Governor-General a letter announcing that his services were required in another and more important sphere of action. "Now for what I grieve to tell you," wrote Metcalfe—"I have been requested by Government to go to Delhi, to take charge of political affairs in Upper India, and the civil administration of the Delhi territory. The Board now at Delhi is to be removed. So is Sir David Ochterlony, who will probably, however, resign, as his measures have been condemned; and I am called on in a very flattering manner to take the place of both."

The letter which Lord Amherst wrote was, indeed, a flattering one—but there was the utmost sincerity in it. And little as Metcalfe desired the change, there must have been found by one of his temperament some compensation in the language of such a letter:

LORD AMHERST TO SIR CHARLES METCALFE.

"*Calcutta, April* 16, 1825.

"MY DEAR SIR CHARLES,—Events which have occurred in the Upper Provinces render it necessary, in the opinion of Government, that a new arrangement shall be made for the administration of affairs in Delhi and Rajpootana, and that to carry such new arrangement into effect, you should assume the office of Resident

at Delhi. I hasten, therefore, to express to you my most anxious hope that no cause exists on your part to prevent your undertaking this arduous and important public duty.

"Much as your services are still demanded at Hyderabad, a nobler field opens for them in the scene of your former residence and employment; and I flatter myself that unless there should be some impediment of which I am not aware to your proceeding to Delhi, you will readily afford your services in a quarter where they are now most urgently required, and where, I hesitate not to say, you can, of all men in India, most benefit your Government and your country.

"Mr. Swinton's letter to you makes it unnecessary that I should enter into further detail.

"I remain, with sincere regard and esteem,

"My dear Sir Charles,

"Your faithful and obedient servant,

"AMHERST."

"I should consider it incumbent on me," wrote Metcalfe, in the private letter already quoted, "to obey any call—but such an one as this is, of course, irresistible. I go, however, reluctantly, and wish that I could have been allowed to rest in peace in the quarter which has now become the home of my heart. I shall quit my public duties here with great regret. I shall quit my friends with greater." He felt, indeed, acutely the severance of these ties; and soon afterwards he wrote to a friend, that he looked to a Calcutta fever as one of the least of the evils which threatened him, and hoped to find in it relief from other more corroding anxieties and distresses.

CHAPTER II.

[1825—1827.]

DELHI REVISITED.

Metcalfe's Return to Calcutta—Residence there—Death of Sir David Ochterlony—Bhurtpore Affairs—Views of the Government—Metcalfe's Minute—Departure for Delhi—Advance of the Armies—Metcalfe in Camp—Fall of Bhurtpore—Subsequent Proceedings—Death of Barnett and Wells—Visit of Lord Amherst—Appointment to Council.

NEVER had more unwelcome honours been conferred on a public servant than those which now descended upon Sir Charles Metcalfe. In spite of all the vexations and annoyances which beset his position, the Hyderabad Residency had become very dear to him. More than twenty years before, he had recorded a resolution not to form any more romantic attachments; but he had been forming them ever since. Indeed, it may be said of him, that he fell in friendship, as other men fall in love. There was at once an ardour and a tenderness in his affection little removed from the degree in which these qualities evince themselves in our attachments to the other sex. He had gathered round him at Hyderabad a beloved circle of friends, to be broken from time to time by the necessities of the public service, but always to reunite again. And although some of these friends might now accompany him to Delhi, it was certain that the old Hyderabad party could never again reassemble in all its pleasant integrity.* It was

* To one of these friends Metcalfe wrote, "I am out of spirits at the change in my prospects. I looked forward to the assemblage

with extreme depression of spirits, therefore, that he now made his preparations for the coming change.

There were other causes, too, in operation, to increase the reluctance which he felt to his approaching departure from the Deccan—causes of a public character. He was anxious in the extreme for the success of the measures which he was pushing forward for the regeneration of the long-devastated provinces of Hyderabad; and he had no assurance that his successor would carry out the system which he had so steadily maintained. But to the call of the Government he responded, without reservation, that he was willing to take upon himself any service which his superiors considered would be advantageous to the interests of the State; and he asked whether it were desirable that he should proceed to Delhi with all possible despatch. Lord Amherst was at this time on the river recruiting his impaired health; and in reply to the reference made to him by Mr. Swinton, he wrote that he was "inclined to avail himself of the ready disposition which Sir Charles shows to give us his immediate assistance, and to request him to come to Calcutta, so as to start thence by dawk as soon as the season will permit."

To Lord Amherst, Metcalfe had greatly recommended himself during his visit to Calcutta in the preceding year; and he had left the Presidency "carrying away with him," as the Governor-General wrote, "the sincere good wishes

of all I love, and a happy time during the rains—our labours in the country to be afterwards resumed. I cannot say that I shall be here for a month, as I must be prepared to start at a moment's notice. Then to leave all behind. I wish that I could take you all with me, and then, although I should still regret our desertion of the fate of this country, my personal regrets would be converted into joyful anticipations."—[*Hyderabad, May* 12, 1825.] Of these friends Captain Sutherland accompanied Sir Charles Metcalfe to Delhi; and Mr. R. Wells and Lieutenant Hislop afterwards joined him there.

of every one in Government House for the entire re-establishment of his health." And now the kind-hearted nobleman wrote to Mr. Swinton to ask, "whether he, or any other friend of Sir Charles Metcalfe, had been commissioned to look out for quarters for him in Calcutta?" "If so," he added, "I beg to acquaint you that I shall have much pleasure in accommodating him, with one or two gentlemen who may accompany him, with quarters at Government House." But Metcalfe had made other arrangements; and when he reached Calcutta, at the latter end of August, he took up his abode at the house of an old friend, Major Lockett, of the College of Fort William —the same house in Chowringhee which Sir Charles had formerly occupied on his own account.

He arrived in Calcutta not in good health; not in good spirits. He had restless nights, and an impaired appetite; he felt the effects of morning labour in evening heaviness and lethargy. The weather during the last weeks of August had been close and sultry; but some heavy falls of rain early in September had cleared the atmosphere and lowered the temperature. With this favourable change Metcalfe suddenly revived, and wrote to his friends at Hyderabad that he was "as well as ever."* But his heart, untravelled, still fondly turned towards the Hyderabad Residency, and he wrote that, although he had little expectation of such an issue, he still hoped that some difference

* Writing on the 24th of August, he thus complained of his health: "I have seldom been less well than since I parted from you. My nights are restless. I get very well through the days, during which I have been fully occupied, but owing to want of sleep, I am weary and lethargic after dinner to a distressing degree."—On the 3rd of September he wrote, that a favourable change of weather (rain) had quite restored him: "I have a good appetite at meals," he said, "and sleep well at night. In short, I am as well as I ever was."

of opinion between Government and himself relative to the course of policy to be pursued in the North-West might occasion his return to the Residency. But this hope was soon abandoned; and on the 11th of September he wrote: "My sentiments as to the course to be pursued with the several refractory states * in the quarter whither I am going, seem to be approved and adopted by the Government; and I am now only waiting for my instructions, which I conclude will be in conformity with my recommendations. I am not sorry for the delay which has occurred, for travelling by dawk would have been scarcely practicable in Bengal during such weather as we have had."

On the first day of October, accompanied by John Sutherland, whom he described as "the representative of the beloved circle at the Residency," he commenced his journey to the North-West. He had been consoled by the receipt of many most affectionate letters from the members of that beloved circle, who deeply felt his removal from them; and he had been exerting himself, and with good success, to obtain the appointment of Wells and Hislop to the Delhi territory. Life is made up of compensations; and Metcalfe had need of all that could solace him at this time. As he started amidst a deluge of rain, along roads rendered almost impassable by the floods—a state of things soon to be exchanged for hot winds and blinding dust—Metcalfe, in the close solitude of his palanquin, had many painful reflections to disturb him. There were circumstances connected with his return to Delhi which acted most depressingly on his mind. It is time that I should relate them.

Together with the letter from Lord Amherst, which Metcalfe had received, towards the end of April, inviting him to proceed again to Delhi, came another from Secretary Swinton, detailing more fully the nature of the office

* See *post*, pp. 32, *et seq.*

or offices which he was to be called upon to fill. It is necessary to the right understanding of the matter that this letter should be inserted here :—

MR. GEORGE SWINTON TO SIR CHARLES METCALFE.

"*Calcutta, April* 16, 1825.

"MY DEAR METCALFE,—The letter from the Governor-General will have explained to you that considerations arising out of the affairs of Jyepore, Alwur, and Bhurtpoore, have induced the Government to resolve on making some arrangement by which Sir David Ochterlony shall retire from active employment on a pension, as formerly suggested by himself.

"The Government is anxious to avail itself of the opportunity which will thus be afforded for again employing you in a situation of the highest trust and importance in Upper India, reposing, as it does, the fullest confidence in your character for talent, judgment, firmness, and experience, and feeling deeply convinced that the state of affairs in Rajpootana, as well as the successful control of our political interests in that quarter generally, require at the present moment the most active and energetic exercise of all those qualities.

"The outline of the arrangement contemplated in the event of your return to Delhi, is as follows :—

"You would be styled Resident at Delhi. In your political capacity you would exercise all the powers and functions formerly appertaining to the office of Resident, and likewise the management of our relations with the states of Rajpootana. The general control and superintendence of the affairs of Malwah would devolve on Mr. Wellesley.

"With respect to the civil management of the Delhi territory, such a modification of the Board is proposed as would remove the present members into the Doab, and leave you with a new member of your own selection to superintend the internal affairs of Delhi. As senior commissioner you would be, to all intents and purposes, the superior local authority in civil as well as political matters, whilst the presence of the junior member would relieve you from a degree of labour and detail which, if vested solely with the control of the assistants in charge, you might find incompatible with the attention due to the more urgent and important functions of your office.

"Government proposes to fix your allowances on the most

liberal scale, such as will indemnify you for the expense and inconvenience incurred by you in removing from Hyderabad to so distant a point as Delhi, and which will at the same time correspond with the high and important trust now to be confided to you. The details of this arrangement will be discussed and settled either on the receipt of your answer, or on your reaching the Presidency.

"To prevent any misconception on your part, I am directed to state to you distinctly that the question of Sir David Ochterlony's retirement does not depend on your accepting or declining the proposal now made to you. If Government should be disappointed in its wish to avail itself of your services as his successor, it must then look to the next best man.

I remain, my dear Metcalfe,

"Yours very sincerely,

"GEORGE SWINTON."

The subject glanced at in the concluding paragraph of this letter was a painful one; but before Metcalfe had finally determined to proceed to Delhi, the question which it suggested had been set at rest in another way. The brave and gentle spirit of David Ochterlony was now to be no longer troubled by the ingratitude of man. He had been translated to a Residency where supercessions and removals are unknown. The intelligence of Sir David's death greeted Metcalfe on his return to Calcutta. The physical infirmities of the fine old soldier had been for some time increasing upon him; but it is not to be doubted that the crisis was precipitated by sufferings of another kind. He believed that he was unjustly treated by the Government which he had so long and so faithfully served. One wound was scarcely healed before another was inflicted. He said that he was disgraced; and saying so, turned his face towards the wall and died.

He died at Meerut on the 15th of July, 1825. On the 4th of that month, he had written to Metcalfe from the Shalimar Gardens, making no mention of his illness; and only a few days before, he had spoken about his future

arrangements, and discoursed of the pleasure it would give him to be Metcalfe's near neighbour and frequent companion. He had contemplated their joint occupation of Shalimar, in which there were several good dwelling-houses; and much pleasant and profitable conversation both on private and public affairs.* But these pleasant anticipations were never realised. Before Metcalfe's heart had responded to this kindly invitation,† the hand that penned it was still for ever. Instead of meeting his old friend in the warm intercourse of personal friendship, it was Metcalfe's lot to pronounce his *éloge*. On the morning of the 26th of September, there was a public meeting assembled in Calcutta for the purpose of paying a tribute of respect to the memory of Sir David Ochterlony. At this meeting Sir Charles Metcalfe was requested to preside. It was his duty, therefore, to set forth the merits of the soldier-statesman; and he did it with all the enthusiasm of genuine admiration and affection.‡ The column which

* Ochterlony had purchased the property from Metcalfe—had sold it to a native, and then re-purchased it, on finding that the man considered that he had done the General a service. He now wrote to Metcalfe offering him the use of his old house. "This arrangement," he added, "of occupying a place we are both so fond of, will not, I hope, be the more disagreeable to you that it will admit of our being as much together, when you rusticate, as your business will admit of, and I promise to retire whenever I interfere with your hours of study and business. Or rather we will so settle it that I shall never have to retire, by settling some regular system. The plan pleases me much, and I shall be glad to hear that it is acceptable to you."—[*June* 28, 1825, *MS. Correspondence.*]

† The intelligence, conveyed to him by his brother from Delhi, must have reached Metcalfe as he entered the river, on his way to Calcutta.

‡ From a sketch of his speech, in Metcalfe's handwriting, I take the following passage:—"Distinguished in the highest degree both in the cabinet and the field, it may truly be said that he was the pride of the Bengal army, many of whose glorious achievements

now stands up conspicuously on the great plain of Calcutta, and is seen alike from the decks of the ships lying in the river, from the windows of Government-house, from the verandahs of the stately palaces of Chowringhee, and from the green ramparts of Fort William, attests the result of the meeting at which Metcalfe so affectionately presided.

But neither this honest tribute, nor the more hollow commendations of the Government in their obituary gazette-notice, nor the minute-guns which numbered the years of the brave old man, could do away with the fact that he died believing himself "dishonoured." The truth is, that the supreme authorities had long been seeking an opportunity to compass Ochterlony's removal from the high and most responsible office which he filled, not only as Resident at Delhi, but as the chief representative of the British Government in Malwah and Rajpootana. The duties of such an office were too onerous for his declining years and failing health. In 1822-23 he had suffered under a total prostration of the nervous system—an often-recurring depression of spirits, almost amounting, as he said, to anguish of mind, which, without any assignable cause, would drive him from the table or the company of

are connected with his renown; an honour to the Company's service, which in every branch loved his character and exalted his fame; and an ornament to the British community in India, which honoured him in life, and deeply laments him in death. We are not met to commemorate his private virtues, but who that witnessed them ever cease to dwell on them with mingled delight and regret? They shed around his public lustre the charm of fascination, and in addition to the enthusiasm excited by his exploits, drew towards him irresistibly, and bound with indissoluble attachment the hearts of all that knew him. Never, perhaps, was there another so universally admired as a public man, at the same time so generally and fervently beloved. Never was there another more calculated to win affection, and when won, to preserve it for ever without diminution."

his friends to indulge in solitude and tears. Incessant labour and anxiety had debilitated his strong frame and unhinged his strong mind, and his medical attendants had insisted upon "the absolute necessity of refraining from business as much as possible; not to engage in conferences that could tend to any excitement; to read nothing that required thought; and to write only when he could not help it, and then only a little at a time if mental exertion were much required." "This," he said, writing to Metcalfe in the later autumn of 1823, "is the brief history of myself for the last twelve months—sometimes better, sometimes worse; but seldom—perhaps I might say never, well."* In November he wrote that his health was improving, and that "if the wicked Rajpoots would cease from their iniquities, he might hope to get well;" but on Christmas-day he wrote to Metcalfe, acknowledging that he "really thought his age and infirmities unequal to the labour of his station, and that if Lord Amherst could be persuaded that his past services of more than twenty years in the diplomatic line entitled him to any consideration," he would most willingly accept any office about Delhi that would give him a diminished salary and diminished dignity, but an increase of ease and leisure. And he had authorized Metcalfe to make a communication of this nature to Government. But it was not convenient at this time to effect a change;† and in the meanwhile, although he was still crippled by the gout, and "carried from chair to Court," the health of the fine old General revived, and with it revived also his ambition.

* *Ochterlony to Metcalfe, October* 24, 1823. *MS. Correspondence.*

† Ochterlony thought that the real reason of the silence of the Government, with respect to his offer, was that they desired his absolute retirement, and were looking for an opportunity to effect it. Perhaps he was right.

But circumstances were now evolving themselves in such a manner as to hurry on the crisis which Ochterlony believed the supreme authorities desired to precipitate. There were troubles threatening us from the Bhurtpore quarter. Twelve years before, we had desired to teach the Rajah what was his duty to the British Government; but we had other employment then both for our money and our troops, and we had suffered ourselves to be grievously insulted.* But the strong measures for the settlement of Central India, which had been carried out with such great success, had induced a more pacific disposition in the Bhurtpore chief, and for many years we seldom turned our eyes apprehensively towards the great Jat fortress. Internal dissensions, however, soon hurried on the results, which would have followed external hostility. The old Bhurtpore Rajah, Runjeet Singh, who had so obstinately defended himself against Lake's army, died, leaving three sons, the eldest of whom succeeded, and died without issue. The second son then ascended the throne; but a claim had been set up by the third, on the ground that he had been adopted by his eldest brother. It was not, however, persevered in at the time. But Doorjun Saul was a man of energy and ambition; and it was believed that the time was not far distant—for the Rajah's infirmities were great—when he would make an effort to seat himself on the throne.

But the reigning prince had a son, or a boy whom he called his son; and apprehensive of the designs of Doorjun Saul, he desired to obtain the public recognition by the British Government of the rightful heirship of the child. After some consideration and discussion, this was granted. In the beginning of 1825, the young Prince was invested, by Sir David Ochterlony, with a dress of honour, and acknowledged as the heir-apparent. Soon afterwards, his

* See Vol. I., Chapter XI.

father died, and then the troubles which had been apprehended broke out openly and violently, and Doorjun Saul attempted to usurp the sovereignty of Bhurtpore. The citadel was seized; the young Rajah was thrown into confinement, and the direction of affairs was violently assumed by the usurper. On this, Ochterlony, with characteristic spirit and energy, issued a proclamation, calling upon the people not to desert their rightful sovereign, who would be supported by the authority of the British Government, backed by a military force that was already assembling. And this was no empty threat. There was no hope of successful negotiation; so Ochterlony put the force which he had assembled in motion, and would have flung it at once upon Bhurtpore, if peremptory orders from the Supreme Government had not come to arrest its progress.

For this precipitate movement, Ochterlony was severely censured. The opportunity long sought for had now arrived. It was intended that the censure should induce the high-spirited old General to throw up his appointment. And he resigned, as it was expected he would. "I resigned," he wrote to Metcalfe, "because I felt myself abandoned and dishonoured, for all their sophistry and tergiversation cannot do away one fact acknowledged in their own despatch. . . . . I could not, in coarse Billingsgate, express my opinion of what I still think evident to every understanding on a comparison of the letters, one authorising and the other denying the investiture and its value." "If," he added, "when I applied to you, they had met my wishes cordially, such was the state of my health and my nervous system, that I should have blessed and gratefully acknowledged the provision kind, humane, and generous; but to revert to it at a moment when they knew my state of health had not any connection with my retirement, is a palpable bit of hypocrisy and dissimu-

lation, which throughout was unnecessary; for a hint, as I have told you, would have been quite sufficient, as I have ever been too proud to force my services where they were not acceptable."*

But at the bottom of this cup of bitterness there were a few sweet drops of consolation. It cheered the old man at times to think that he would be succeeded at the Delhi Residency by his "dearest Charles," by one endeared to him by an unbroken intimacy, and a close correspondence of twenty years' duration; by one whom, the veteran was wont to say, he would have loved as a son, if he had not looked up to him with so much veneration. "It is my intention," he wrote to Metcalfe, a month before his death, "to fix my residence at Delhi, and the only gratification I have experienced in all the injustice and hypocrisy I have met with is, that they have selected you to repair and remove the evils which have long been prevalent *here*, and have done me the honour of selecting you as my successor in the (Rajpoot) principalities, which I regard as a compliment." But neither such reflected honour as this, nor the prospect of many pleasant hours in Metcalfe's society at Shalimar, could heal the wounds that had been inflicted on the old man's sensitive heart. The letters in which he spoke of the anticipated reunion with his old friend, were almost his last. He left Delhi early in July, seeking change of air, and reached Meerut only to die.

It would have been strange if these melancholy circumstances had not rendered Metcalfe's return to Delhi peculiarly painful to him. There were others, too, which increased the acuteness of these sensations. Not the least of his distresses arose out of a correspondence which occurred at this time between Metcalfe and his old assistant, William Fraser, who desired again to be asso-

* *Ochterlony to Metcalfe, June* 15, 1825. *MS.*

ciated with him in the administration of the Delhi territory. They had been at variance with each other in former days. Metcalfe believed that William Fraser had been over-speculative, too much disposed to put his own theories into practice; and this Fraser now acknowledged with a manly candour, a frank sincerity most honourable to the character of the man; but he said, at the same time, that he was now greatly altered. Metcalfe believed that they were not likely to proceed amicably together; but against this supposition Fraser protested, and with touching earnestness declared his conviction that the day was not far distant when Metcalfe would think otherwise of his character. I have but one half of the correspondence before me, and cannot, therefore, dwell upon the subject. I only allude to it in illustration of the many painful environments of Metcalfe's position on his return to the Delhi Residency.

But there was stirring work before him at this time, and soon all private considerations were absorbed in the paramount urgency of the public affairs, which now called for his undivided attention. On the 21st of October, Metcalfe arrived at Delhi. In the beginning of November, the camp of the Resident was pitched outside the walls of the imperial city, and he promptly commenced his march for Bhurtpore.

I have briefly narrated the circumstances of the usurpation of Doorjun Saul. It has been shown, too, that the measures undertaken by Sir David Ochterlony for the chastisement of the usurper were conceived, by the supreme authorities at Calcutta, to be precipitate and unwise. It is certain that an unsuccessful attempt upon Bhurtpore would have had the worst possible effect upon the minds of the chiefs and the people of India. Exaggerated accounts of our want of success in Burmah had reached them, and already were they beginning to indulge in idle

speculations on the downfall of the Company's *Raj*. Moreover, when Ochterlony took the field, the supreme authorities had not yet come to the determination of breaking through those principles of non-interference to which they then professed to adhere.* It was not until Metcalfe arrived at Calcutta that they were impressed with a sense of the expediency of resorting to measures of the most vigorous kind.

Called upon to state freely his opinions, he drew up an elaborate minute on the state of our relations with Bhurtpore,† not, as it has been seen, without some expectation that his opinions would not meet with due response from

* It should be said, too, that since Ochterlony's movement the progress of events had rendered the necessity of interference more apparent. "In the first place," to use the words of a resolution of the Governor-General in Council, "the uncertainty which then prevailed regarding the ulterior views and intentions of Doorjun Saul has been completely set at rest by his open, unequivocal usurpation of the style and titles, as well as the authority of Maharajah, or sovereign of Bhurtpore. In the second place, a schism has now taken place among the people of the country, who before appeared to be united in favour of Doorjun Saul. The party of the usurper is opposed by that of his brother, Madhoo Singh, who has seized the fort of Deeg and a considerable part of the territory. Hence have resulted the most serious internal anarchy, bloodshed, and commotion. The tranquillity of our adjoining district of Agra is, therefore, exposed to considerable hazard. Doorjun Saul here called upon all the chiefs and leading men of his tribe, whether residing within the British territory or that of Bhurtpore, to take part in the quarrel; many of our subjects have, in consequence, flocked to his standard; and we know from the Akbars, and other sources of intelligence, that parties of armed men are continually pouring in from the neighbouring states of Ulwur, Jyepore, and Gwalior, which will probably themselves, ere long, be drawn into the quarrel."—[*MS. Records.*] I am not sure that this paper has not been published.

† And also of Ulwur and Jyepore. Of these I shall speak presently.

Government. At the commencement of this paper he laid down the following propositions:

"We have, by degrees, become the paramount State of India. Although we exercised the powers of this supremacy in many instances before 1817, we have used and asserted them more generally since the existence of our influence by the events of that and the following year. It then became an established principle of our policy to maintain tranquillity among all the states of India, and to prevent the anarchy and misrule which were likely to disturb the general peace. Sir John Malcolm's proceedings in Malwah were governed by this principle, as well as those of Sir David Ochterlony. In the case of succession to a principality, it seems clearly incumbent on us, with reference to that principle, to refuse to acknowledge any but the lawful successor, as otherwise we should throw the weight of our power into the scale of usurpation and injustice." *

*"The home Government disapproved of the sentiments expressed in this and other passages of Metcalfe's memorandum given in the text. The Secret Committee observe:—"We cannot pass over without notice the important memorandum of Sir Charles Metcalfe, which forms an enclosure in your despatch of the 16th of September. Sir Charles Metcalfe has there endeavoured to establish the necessity and propriety of British interference in the succession and internal concerns of independent native powers to an extent in which we cannot concur; and the high sense which we entertain of the ability and services of that gentleman, makes it only the more necessary that we should distinctly express our dissent from his opinions on that subject. . . . . We cannot admit that the extension of our power by the events of the years 1817-1818 has in any degree extended our right of interference in the internal concerns of other states, except in so far as that right has been established by treaty. If the most numerous and powerful party in an independent principality is disposed to admit of a change in the order of succession, and to acknowledge any other than the lineal successor, we have neither the right nor the duty to act as 'Supreme Guardians of Law and Right,' and as such to constitute ourselves judges of the validity of the title of the person who exercises the functions of Government. It is impossible to prescribe by definite rules the exact

In accordance with these principles, Metcalfe declared that we were bound, "as supreme guardians of general tranquility, law, and right, to maintain the legal succession of the Rajah Bulwunt Singh." This duty he declared was so imperative, that he attached no peculiar importance to the act of investiture, on which Ochterlony had laid so much stress. Being a child, it was necessary that a regency should be appointed to superintend the administration of the titular chief; but the conduct of his uncle, Doorjún Saul, who was his natural guardian, had rendered it impossible that we should nominate him to the head of the administration, and the temper of his brother, Madhoo Singh, was at least doubtful. "If," wrote Metcalfe, "Doorjun Saul persist in his usurpation, and retain possession of Bhurtpore, it will be necessary to dislodge him by force of arms. Madhoo Singh,* in that case, will either join his brother in opposing us, in which event he will be subject to the same exclusion from the Bhurtpore territory; or he will act with us on the side of the Rajah, which would give him a claim to consideration."

It was possible, however, that Doorjun Saul, on the appearance of our meditated hostilities, would propose to relinquish his usurpation of the Raj, and stipulate for

moment or circumstances in which intervention may become necessary; but we feel it an indispensable duty to repeat to you that the danger by which it is to be justified must be actual and immediate, not contingent and remote."—[*Secret Committee to Governor-General in Council, March* 26, 1826. *MS. Records*]

* Of this man's position Metcalfe wrote in another passage: "Originally engaged with Doorjun Saul in the violence which established the power of the latter, he has now separated himself from him, affecting to denounce his usurpation, and to uphold the right of the infant Rajah. If Madhoo Singh be sincere in these professions, he may redeem his past fault, and may be useful in re-establishing the Government of Rajah Bulwunt Singh, in which it might not perhaps be necessary to exclude him from the administration."

confirmation in the Regency; and this was a contingency for which provision should be made. How it was to be met Metcalfe never doubted. "This," he said, "would be a continuation, in a modified shape, of the usurpation which he effected by violence in contempt of our supremacy. It would not be possible to obtain any security for the safety of the young Rajah, Doorjun Saul, who is either the next heir, or at least a pretender to the Raj." Moreover, it was probable that such an arrangement would be resisted by Madhoo Singh; so that in attempting to avoid hostilities with one brother, we were likely to come into collision with the other, and so establish an alliance with the worse for the subjection of the better of the two. "We are not," continued Metcalfe, "called upon to espouse the cause of either brother, and if we must act by force it would seem to be desirable to banish both; but of the two, Madhoo Singh seems to be the most respectable in character, and the greatest favourite with his countrymen." On the whole, however, he declared "that it was difficult at that early stage, and at a distance from the scene of operations, to determine more than that 'the succession' of the Rajah Bulwunt Singh must be maintained, and such a regency established during his minority as may be prescribed by the customs of the state; with due security for the preservation of his safety and his rights."

That this could be effected by peaceful negotiation was little probable; but Metcalfe saw clearly that in such a conjuncture war might not be without its uses:

"Desirable," he said, "as it undoubtedly is that our differences with all these states should be settled without having recourse to arms, there will not be wanting sources of consolation if we be compelled to that extremity. In each of these states our supremacy has been violated or slighted, under a persuasion that we were prevented by entanglements elsewhere from sufficiently resenting the indignity. A display and vigorous exercise of our

power, if rendered necessary, would be likely to bring back men's minds in that quarter to a proper tone; and the capture of Bhurtpore, if effected in a glorious manner, would do us more honour throughout India, by a renewal of the hitherto unfaded impression caused by our former failure, than any other event that can be conceived."

Whatever doubts the further development of the great plot of the Bhurtpore drama, since the disgrace of Sir David Ochterlony, may have left in the minds of the Governor-General and his advisers, they were now dissipated by the reasoning of Sir Charles Metcalfe. And on the 16th of September a resolution was passed by the Governor-General in Council, declaring that, "impressed with a full conviction that the existing disturbance at Bhurtpore, if not speedily quieted, would produce general commotion and interruption of the public tranquillity in Upper India; and feeling convinced that it was their solemn duty, no less than their right, as the paramount power and conservators of the general peace, to interfere for the prevention of these evils, and that these evils would be best prevented by the maintenance of the succession of the rightful heir to the Raj of Bhurtpore, whilst such a course would be in strict consistency with the uniform practice and policy of the British Government in all analogous cases, the Governor-General in Council resolved that authority be conveyed to Sir C. T. Metcalfe to accomplish the above objects, if practicable, by expostulation and remonstrance, and should these fail, by a resort to measures of force."

There was little doubt that they would fail. On the very day on which this resolution was passed, a letter was addressed to the Adjutant-General of the army, directing him to "request the Commander-in-Chief to take measures for holding in readiness a force adequate to the prompt reduction of the principal fortresses in the Bhurtpore country, and for carrying on military operations in that

quarter, on the requisition of the Resident, Sir Charles Metcalfe." The power of peace or war was committed to the hands of the Delhi Resident, as one sure to use it with judgment and moderation, but, if need be, with promptitude and vigour. The course which had been finally adopted, not without much reluctance on the part of Government, was emphatically his own; and he had been told that the responsibility was his—that the safety of India was in his keeping. But he was not one to shrink from any kind of responsibility. What he always most dreaded was control.

When Metcalfe quitted Calcutta, it appeared that war was inevitable. When he reached Delhi it was still more apparent. Exhortation and remonstrance could do nothing.* The attitude of Doorjun Saul was hostile and defiant. On the 25th of November, Metcalfe issued a proclamation, declaring that the British Government had determined to support the claims of the infant Prince, Bulwunt Singh. Our troops were ready. The Commander-in-Chief, Lord Combermere, was prepared to take the field. On the 6th of December he met his political colleague in camp. The authority vested in the latter to set the army in motion was now exercised; and he himself prepared to accompany it to the walls of Bhurtpore.

* Necessitated as I am to condense some portions of the narrative, I have reluctantly omitted more especial mention of Metcalfe's letters to Doorjun Saul and Mádhoo Singh. They were masterpieces of their kind, and excited great admiration in Calcutta. "I was much delighted," wrote Chief Secretary Swinton, "with your letters to Doorjun Saul and Madhoo Singh. They are models of correspondence with native chiefs. . . . Your letter about Jotah Ram is also excellent. His lordship said that it was the first letter on this puzzled subject which he could understand." In another letter he says: "Success to your measures at Bergen-op-Zoom! You know my sentiments as to your way of doing business with native gentlemen. Poor Doorjun Saul has caught a Tartar in you, and knows it, I dare say."

The reduction of this formidable Jaut fortress had long been esteemed by Metcalfe a necessary condition of the tranquillity of Upper India. For more than twenty years it had seemed to snort defiance at the victorious Feringhees. Pretexts for a hostile movement against its possessors had not been wanting before; but it had been deemed expedient to abstain from an effort which required a vast expenditure both of men and of money to secure its success. This very forbearance had increased the prestige of the impregnability of the fortress and the presumption of its owners. The walls of the palace were said to have been covered over with rude caricatures illustrative of the ignominious defeat of the British armies. So long as the place was held by men who disregarded our friendship and were careless of our enmity, it seemed to taunt us with our past failures, and to be a rallying-point for all the presumptuous hopes, the disappointed ambition, the rankling discontent that might still be festering in Upper India. Metcalfe had witnessed our early failures; he had speculated on their causes; he had himself found, some years later, an insolent antagonist in the Rajah of Bhurtpore, and had deplored the necessity which compelled Lord Minto to keep the sword in the scabbard under so great provocation. He knew that sooner or later the time must come for the reduction of a place the possessors of which, relying on its strength, were continually working us grievous annoyance. And now the hour was at hand, and he himself was directing the armies which were to pluck this thorn from our side.

The two divisions of Lord Combermere's army—the one under General Nicolls, the other under General Reynell—broke ground from Agra and Muttra on the 7th and 8th of December. Eager to gain time, which, whilst he was organizing his means of defence, was everything to him, Doorjun Saul renewed his correspondence with Metcalfe.

But he was addressing a man who knew well how to fathom the guile of native chiefs, and who was not to be betrayed into the loss of a single hour by any such shallow pretences for delay. The English diplomatist read the usurper's letters, and answered them. But the army advanced steadily on Bhurtpore.

It has been seen what were Metcalfe's opinions regarding the folly of attempting to undertake any great military operations with insufficient means. To such overweening reliance in the power of British troops to overcome all obstacles he attributed the disasters which from time to time had overtaken our arms; and he had never ceased to protest against the wickedness of risking failure, when, humanly speaking, by apportioning our means to the magnitude of the end to be accomplished, success was within our reach. It was graphically said by an old native, who in 1805 had seen from the walls of Bhurtpore the British army advancing, that it looked on the plain below like two marriage processions. This great cardinal error was not now to be committed again. A fine force of all arms, with a powerful battering-train and some of the ablest scientific officers in the country, was now moving against the redoubtable Jaut fortress. It was soon seen that the war in the South-East had not drained India of her troops. The very flower of the Indian army, intent on a great enterprise, was now assembled in the North-West. It was a season of intense excitement; and there were those who believed that the fate of the British-Indian Empire depended upon the issue of the coming struggle.

The military details of this memorable siege do not rightfully belong to such a memoir as this. Metcalfe had now placed the conduct of affairs in the hands of the Commander-in-Chief, and for a while he became little more than a spectator. But he was a true soldier at heart. He was continually in communication, personally or by

letter, with Lord Combermere and the generals of division, or entertaining them in his tent; and he watched the progress of the siege with intensest interest, eager to take part in the affray. And when alone in camp, with no immediate business before him, he was studying all the books within his reach on the attack of fortified places.* From time to time his hopes of success fluctuated painfully; he had no sustained conviction that all the appliances at our disposal would be concentrated upon the great work before us. He thought that he saw evidences of a recurrence to the old system of leaving everything to chance.

"We are not getting on here as I like," he wrote on the 6th of January. "At one time we were; and I had great hopes that the place would be taken scientifically, without risk or loss. I have now no such expectation. We are to storm soon—and with the usual uncertainty. We may succeed, and I hope that we shall; but we may fail—and whether we succeed or fail will depend upon chance. The business will not be made so secure as I thought it would be, and as I conceive it ought to be. What we have brought together our large means for I do not understand, if risk is to be incurred at the end of our operations. It would have been better tried at the beginning. We might have taken the place in the first hour;† and we may take it now. But much as I shall rue it, I shall not be surprised if we fail. It staggers my opinion to find General Nicolls confident; but I cannot surrender my judgment even to his on this point absolutely, and I remain anxious and nervous. My opinion will not be altered by success, for I shall still consider it as the work of chance. We ought not to leave anything to chance, and we are doing it with regard to everything. Either our boasted science is unavailable or unavailing against Indian fortifications, or we are now about to throw away our advantage. I shudder both for Nicolls and for Sutherland. The former, I think, may perish in carrying on his difficult attack; and the ardour of the latter will carry him into unnecessary danger. God preserve them both, and save us from the not improbable

* A book which he read with much pleasure and profit at this time was Lake's "Sieges of the Madras army."

† This was said of Sebastopol in 1855, and of Delhi in 1857.

consequences of our folly. You will have good news or bad very soon."

But the army before Bhurtpore did not neglect to avail itself of the appliances of European science. The nature of the works rendered it difficult, if not impossible, to destroy them by the fire of our breaching batteries. It was determined, therefore, to mine the walls at what were considered the most vulnerable points. On the morning of the 18th of January, three mines were exploded. The most important of them, under the north-east cavalier, contained ten thousand pounds of gunpowder. Our storming columns, under Nicolls and Reynell, then advanced. There was a mighty massacre and a great success. Eight thousand of the enemy were slain; and the British ensign waving over the far-famed citadel of Bhurtpore scattered the traditions of centuries to the winds, and declared that nothing was beyond the power of the military genius of the Feringhees.

The old soldierly instincts, which more than twenty years before had sent the "little stormer" into the breach at Deeg, now again hurried him to the front. With eager interest, he had watched the great explosion from a convenient battery, and when the storming columns ascended the hill of rubbish, hearing that Lord Combermere intended to enter the breach, he pushed up the ascent, with some members of the chief's staff, and was soon on the crest of the breach.*

* From a letter written by Metcalfe three years afterwards, to Lord Combermere, relative to an incident of the siege, involving a question relating to the claims of a staff-officer to honorary distinction, I find the following passage illustrative of his participation in the storm:—"I left the battery," wrote Metcalfe, "in order to join the Commander-in-Chief, on some symptom or intelligence of his Excellency's intention of going up the breach. My memory was impressed with the recollection of having followed Beatson along the trench from the battery, in which we had wit-

From the following letter, written a few days afterwards in camp, to his young friend, Lieut. Hislop, his impressions of the storm may be gathered :—

"*Camp before Bhurtpore, January* 23, 1826.

I had written thus far on the 17th, when I was interrupted. We stormed on the 18th. It was a glorious affair, and our success was most complete. Sutherland accompanied General Nicolls, who commanded the storm on the left. It was a proper place for Sutherland, and I could not object to his being there. I was afraid at one time that he was bent on something rash. Complete as our success has been, we have had a narrow escape from a most disastrous defeat. We can now see that neither the right breach nor the left, both made by battering, were practicable. . . . . The engineers very properly refused to report the breaches practicable; and by their steadiness we were saved from incalculable misfortune. Different breaches were subsequently made, both to the right and to the left, by mining; and by these our columns stormed. One of the mines was sprung immediately before our advance, and blew up the north-east angle of the place. It had been carried under the ditch, and was the work of many days. The enemy does not seem to have been aware of it; and altogether they failed in countermining us, and did nothing themselves creditable in the way of mining. Our first mines were bungling, but the latter ones were very grand. That to the right did a great deal of mischief to ourselves, for the people assembled in the trenches were too near, and the explosion of the mine took effect outwards. It was a grand sight, and was immediately followed by that of the advance of the storming columns up the two grand breaches; that on the left advanced first on the signal of the explosion of the mine, and that on the right immediately afterwards. Both mounted the breaches steadily, and as quickly as the loose earth and steepness of the ascent would

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nessed the success of the right and left attacks in the carrying of both breaches, towards the position in which we had left your lordship. I missed you, and understanding that you had gone up the breach, I followed. In the breach I was entangled in a regiment of native infantry then mounting, and was on the right of it when we reached the top. I then found that your lordship was on the cavalier on the left, and in order to reach you, I had to cross the column.

admit, and attained the summit without opposition. It was a most animating spectacle. I had posted myself where I saw the whole perfectly. The instant before I had separated myself from the Commander-in-Chief, because in the position which he had taken, to the right of the angle of the fort, one could not see the left column, and went to a battery which gave a view of both breaches, and the angle where the mine was to be sprung. I congratulate myself on having done so, for many about the Commander-in-Chief were killed or bruised by the explosion of our mine, and his own escape was surprising. The other forts of the country are falling without opposition. I trust that the effect will be good everywhere. We have now to set up Rajah Bulwunt Singh's Government, and to dispose of Koor Madhoo Singh, who has been playing a double game, and therefore causes some embarrassment. I wish that he had joined his brother, Doorjun Saul, for his neutrality was of no real service, and we were obliged to take the same precautions against him as if he had been an open enemy: but I must not drag you into local politics, which I have not time to explain fully."

It is pleasant to turn from the picture of war and carnage which this letter suggests, to the contemplation of the Delhi Resident, before Bhurtpore, seated quietly in his tent a fortnight after the siege, forgetting the troubled politics of Rajpootana, and discussing Miss Edgeworth's novels. The following, from a letter to the same correspondent, is too characteristic to be omitted, even if I did not desire to insert it, for the sake of the contrast it presents to the foregoing :*

* It shows how his mind was then clinging, as it long clung, to the thought of the never-to-be-attained dignity of an independent member of Parliament. There is also another characteristic passage in the same letter, which I cannot bring myself to reject. After speaking of some remarks which had been made in consequence of a circumstance connected with his resistance of the "plunder of the Nizam," he feelingly observes: "I am getting callous to such injustice. My experience at Hyderabad has taught me some useful lessons; and though it gives me a worse opinion of human nature than I had before, it will make me, individually, less liable to annoyance, by making me less anxious regarding the opinion of

"*Camp Bhurtpore, February* 2, 1826.

"I glory in your views. Encourage ambition, and look to the highest point. I have noticed before, I think, what Johnson says on this head—something to the following effect, but better expressed:—'He who aims at the highest point may not succeed in reaching it, but he will reach higher than the man who aims lower.' Ambition, accompanied by the conviction that nothing is great but what is good, must tend to elevate mind and heart, and make an illustrious and virtuous character. You must, of course, be on your guard against disappointments, for the world abounds with them; but you will have a sure defence in religious and devout feelings, which of themselves produce happiness, and without which there is none. The state of mind described in your letter is exactly what I would wish you to have. I agree with you in the opinion that you want steadiness; but this will come; and I never knew one so young as you who had it more in essentials. In short, my dear boy, I expect that you will be everything excellent, and believe that you are so already, in the most important respects. I am glad that you have read 'Patronage.' My recollection is not so fresh as to enable me to accompany you into a review of all the characters in their nice distinctions, but I recollect generally the virtues and beauties of those of the Percy family. I think that Mr. Percy's character would have been exalted by the performance of the duty of an independent member of Parliament; but Miss Edgeworth perhaps doubted the existence of such an uncommon personage. It is an admirable work, and if I had time I should be disposed to read it again. It is the fashion to abuse such works, as if they were unworthy to be read, except in mere idleness. My opinion of them is, that they are calculated to produce a vast deal of good; and that they have more effect on the mind and heart than any other kind of reading."

But we must return again to war and politics. "Are you not contented—can any one be otherwise?" wrote Nicolls to Metcalfe, after the siege. He was contented. The event had exceeded his expectations; and he felt an

others. Goodwill to all does not produce a reciprocal feeling; right motives do not ensure general respect. To obtain popularity, public interests must be sacrificed to private. These are the lessons which I have learned at Hyderabad; but God forbid that I should ever be swayed by them."

inexpressible relief.* "The contrast," wrote his old friend Butterworth Bayley, then a member of the Supreme Council, "between your feelings, at the same place, twenty years ago and those at the moment when you reached the interior of the citadel on the 18th, must have been sufficiently forcible." Forcible they were, indeed. Congratulations now came in from all quarters; none more genuine than those which came from Calcutta. Doubt and uncertainty had reigned there for some time. All sorts of extravagant rumours had forced their way into circulation. Metcalfe's own letters had not diminished the nervous anxiety of the Government. And in proportion to the depression in which they had before been sunk, was now

* He did not, however, believe that any very disastrous consequences would have attended our failure. In a council-minute written two or three years afterwards, Metcalfe said: "There is no positive foundation for a supposition that a failure at Bhurtpore would have been attended with general or even partial revolt. A failure at Bhurtpore would undoubtedly have given a shock to our power in every part of India. It would have encouraged disaffection. It would have shaken the confidence of our army. It would have confirmed the belief that we might be successfully resisted; and it seems impossible to say to what it might, or what it might not have led. But although there is evidence that the result of the siege of that fortress was looked to with intense anxiety by all the states and all the people of India, accompanied, no doubt, by an universal wish for our failure, I am not aware of any ground for the supposition that immediate revolt was prepared or contemplated in any quarter. And had a general revolt taken place from such a cause, it would have had no connection whatever with our system of political relations or internal administration in Central India. It would have been the reaction of India against its conquerors. It would have been the bursting forth of national antipathy. It would have been the torrent of hatred sweeping away the restraint previously imposed by fear. It would have been the rising *en masse* of tribes and nations to throw off a detested foreign yoke. It would have been nothing that any system of arrangement in Central India could have caused, or prevented, or remedied."—[*September* 8, 1828.]

the elation of their spirits. No more glorious tidings than these had ever stirred the great heart of society, or turned the anxieties of our statesmen into gratitude and joy.

There were no more hearty congratulations than those which Metcalfe received from the Governor-General, who frankly admitted that the "honours of the triumph" were fairly due to him, as he would have shared the disgrace of failure.* It is not always that a Governor-General is as ready to divide the one as the other with his subordinates.

Bhurtpore having thus been taken, and the usurper, Doorjun Saul, captured and sent a prisoner to Allahabad, it devolved upon Metcalfe to place the young Prince upon the throne, and to establish a new Government. After some delay—the result of circumstances which he both deplored and condemned†—the initial arrangements for the conduct of the administration were made, and the subsequent details of adjustment were left in the hands of Major Lockett, an old friend of Metcalfe, in whom he had deserved confidence. There was further business to be settled in the state of Ulwur (or Macherry), which had before given the Delhi Resident some trouble;‡ and, at one time, it was believed that there would be further work for our armies. But the hostile party in this petty principality was in no mood to excite the resentment of the captors of Bhurtpore; and what we had long demanded

* Lord Amherst's excellent letter is given entire in the Appendix.

† Writing to Lieutenant Hislop early in February, Metcalfe said: "It is uncertain whether we go against Ulwur or not; ut a few days will decide. Our plundering here under the name of prize has been very disgraceful, and has tarnished our well-earned honour. Until I can get rid of the prize-agents, I cannot re-establish the sovereignty of the young Rajah, whom we came professedly to protect, and have been plundering to his last lotah since he fell into our hands."

‡ See *ante*, Vol. I. Chapter XI.

in vain through our diplomatists, was now readily yielded to our arms.*

Having settled the political affairs entrusted to him, Metcalfe now turned his attention to the civil administration of the Delhi territory, and was for some time on a judicial circuit.† The setting in of the hot winds necessarily compelled his return to the Imperial City. The summer was a melancholy one. Within a brief space of time, two of his dearest friends, the one at Aurungabad, the other at Delhi, were carried off by the diseases of the country. He had not recovered from the shock which had been inflicted upon him by the announcement of the death of Captain Barnett, who, Metcalfe declared some years before, had made him forego his intention of never loving any one again, when his much-cherished friend, Richard Wells, was stricken down before his eyes. How deeply he felt these bereavements may be gathered from his private letters at this time. To Major J. A. Moore, secretary to the Hyderabad Residency, he wrote, at the beginning of July:—

"You will have heard long before you receive this of the second blow which in a short space it has pleased Almighty God to inflict upon us. One brief month included to us here the death of both

* On the 23rd of February, Metcalfe wrote from Camp, Beerum, "I have some troublesome little matters on my hands still, connected with the winding-up of Bhurtpore and Ulwur affairs; but I hope to get over them soon, and then the army left with me will break up. The Commander-in-Chief has gone, and General Reynell and the European troops—excepting the Honourable Company's European regiment. The native corps for distant stations are also off. Those of the neighbourhood remain under General Nicolls, until my business be finished. After which I have the judicial circuit of my Delhi district before me."

† For the arrangements made on Metcalfe's re-appointment to Delhi for the civil administration of the district see a letter from the Chief Secretary in the Appendix.

Barnett and Wells. "I could not put pen to paper (except in one instance, by desire of his desolate widow) to any one respecting the last of these sad events. I ought to have written to you, but I could not find heart to write on the subject. Nor can I now. We have been thoroughly wretched. The world is fast receding from me; for what is the world without the friends of our heart? You remember the three friends with whom I arrived at Hyderabad, in 1820—Barnett, Wells, Mackenzie. I loved them all cordially. Where are they now? I cannot bear to write on this subject—but I can hardly think of any other."

To his young friend, Lieutenant Hislop, he wrote with still greater emphasis of sorrow on this mournful subject. Violent as is the anguish of mind here expressed, no one in the full knowledge of the strength of Charles Metcalfe's affections will say that the language is exaggerated:—

"Sutherland tells me that he has kept you informed of our miserable prospect, and final wretchedness, during the illness which has terminated in the death of our virtuous and beloved friend Wells. You can conceive our affliction. I honour Sutherland for his fortitude and consideration in performing that act of friendship towards you. I had not heart to put pen to paper on the subject. What happiness, what delight had we not in prospect from our reunion in this house. Think of the desolation and forlornness of the poor dear widow! She who was to have been the presiding goddess of our happy parties! . . . . . Utterly desolating as the loss is to her, I scarcely think that her grief can exceed the anguish which I feel, when the full sense of our calamity bursts upon me; for although her suffering is undoubtedly beyond comparison the greatest of all, yet grief is not regulated by reasoning, or the exact weight and measure of loss sustained, and I often feel that which cannot, I think, be exceeded. I shall never dream of happiness again. I do not mean to say that I shall not recover my usual spirits. I no doubt shall, and that even too soon for my own satisfaction; for I would willingly cherish and cling to this sorrow, and shall often think with pain of being careless and cheerful, when Wells cannot be here to share our mirth. But happiness, the happiness of the heart, I never shall be able to dream of again; for if the thought should ever come across my mind, the recollection of the manner in which this last dream was destroyed will chill me to the soul,

and make me shudder with horror. The loss of friends, it is said, draws closer the ties with those that remain. It is natural that it should be so, and in the end it doubtless is so; but I do not feel that it is the first effect of such an affliction as we have sustained. I find my heart, instead of expanding to other friends, absorbed in sorrow for the one lost object. Your arrival, the prospect of which used to fill me with delight, when you were to share and complete our promised happiness, is contemplated now, much as I wish to see you, without any such feeling; for what, alas! can give delight now? And the coming of the Bushbys, who were to have brought additional pleasure, will now be irreparably connected in memory with that sad event which will perhaps immediately lead to it. Now is the time in which all worldly ambition sinks into nothing. Were I to hear at this moment of my nomination to be Governor-General of India, or Prime Minister of England, I am sure that the intelligence would create no sensation but disgust. And turning from earthly things what certain consolation is there in reflecting on those of heaven? . . . . . How horror-struck you will be. You left Barnett well, and he is gone. You anticipated happiness from meeting Wells, and he is gone. Thus, in your short journey, two of our best friends, two of the greatest blessings of life, have been taken from us. And are we to be happy and cheerful again as before? It seems impossible; yet past experience tells us that it may be so. I am fast outliving all my friends. All who accompanied me to Hyderabad in the end of 1820, all younger than myself by from ten to sixteen years, have left this world before me; and in the last twelve months I have lost no less than five friends on whose hearts I could rely. Such is our tenure of mortal happiness! . . . . . Since writing the above, I find that Sutherland is ill. He is looking very ill. He ill, and you on the highway at this trying season, I know not what further misery may be in store: and I tremble."

The breaking-up of the rainy season of 1826 saw Metcalfe again in progress—visiting the Rajpootana states. The Governor-General was at this time commencing his tour through the Upper Provinces of India; and among other occupations which the Delhi Resident now saw before him for the ensuing cold weather, was the reception of Lord Amherst and his family, and the arrangement of

the ceremonials of meeting between his lordship and the pageant-King of Delhi, which had caused so much foolish disputation on the occasion of Lord Moira's visit, twelve years before, to the Court of the Mogul.

All these things and others were duly performed. But his connection with the Delhi Residency was now drawing to a close. That Sir Charles Metcalfe was to succeed to a seat in the Supreme Council had for some time been a fact officially recognised, and, for a longer period still, matter of public report. As far back as September, 1825, Sir George Robinson, then Deputy-Chairman of the Company, had written to Metcalfe, with especial reference to the transactions at Hyderabad: "I hope, sir, as far as the opinions of a very humble individual can be of any value to you, you will allow me to express my admiration of the firmness and public principle which have marked your conduct throughout the progress of a business surrounded with difficulties; and which reflects, as I conceive, such distinguished credit on your public character; that, so far as my exertions can conduce thereto, I shall endeavour to promote your appointment to Council whenever the opportunity occurs of nominating you thereto." And early in the following April the promise was fulfilled. Mr. Marjoribanks, who then occupied the Chair, was as eager to make the appointment as his colleague; and on the 11th, in a Court consisting of twenty members, nineteen voted that Sir Charles Metcalfe should be appointed to a provisional seat in the Council of India.

The vacant seat, however, was to be found. The uncertainty which shrouded the intentions of Mr. Harrington, the senior member of Council, somewhat perplexed Metcalfe. His correspondents, including Lord Amherst, both at the Presidency and in the Vice-regal Camp, were anxious to supply him with all the information they could

gather; but the rumours of to-day contradicted the reports of yesterday. At last, in the hot weather of 1827, it was confidently announced that Mr. Harrington was negotiating for a passage to England.* And in the course of July, all doubts being removed, Sir Charles Metcalfe made his preparations to drop down the river to Calcutta. He spent some days at Agra waiting for John Sutherland, who was to join him there, and then, continuing his progress in the society of his friend, reached the Presidency at the end of August.

* He had been absent for some time for the benefit of his health. Mr. Bayley, the junior member of Council, had also been on the sick-list. So that Lord Combermere was alone in Council.

CHAPTER III.

[1827—1834.]

THE SEAT IN COUNCIL.

Metcalfe in Council—Duties and Labours of a Councillor—Life in Calcutta—Metcalfe and his Colleagues—Departure of Lord William Bentinck—Increase of Cordiality—Assigneeship of Palmer and Co.—The Deputy-Governorship—Reported appointment to Madras—Extension of Time in Council—Extracts from Metcalfe's Minutes.

So Sir Charles Metcalfe took his seat in the Supreme Council of India. The highest prize in the regular line of the service was now gained. It was his privilege to sit at the same Board with the Governor-General—to write minutes on every possible subject of domestic administration and foreign policy—to draw a salary of 10,000*l.* a year—to be addressed as an "Honourable"—and to subside into a nonentity.

At this time, according to the constitution of the Supreme Government, the Council consisted of the Governor-General, the Commander-in-Chief, and two members of the Civil Service. Lord Amherst was still Governor-General. Lord Combermere was Commander-in-Chief. Metcalfe's civil colleague in the Administration was his old and esteemed friend William Butterworth Bayley.

To be a member of the Supreme Council of India is to be almost anything that the incumbent of the office pleases to make himself. It may be to live in a state of somnolent bewilderment, idly dreaming of a prodigious

array of state affairs flitting obscurely before him; to be haunted by shadows of public business which he seldom even attempts to grasp; to give a few ill-considered opinions in Council, and out of it to write a vast number of ill-shaped initials on the back of state papers which are sent round for his perusal. Or it may be to perform the functions, zealously and indefatigably, of an over-worked public servant, scorning delight and living laborious days, amidst the mass of business that crowds upon him for its discharge; to begin early and to end late, and yet never to feel that his duties have been adequately performed; to write much and to read more; to combat others' opinions, and to enforce his own; to be continually emulating the penal servitude of the Titan, and forcing the great rock of public business up the ascent only to see it roll back again to his feet. It may be, on the one hand, the *otium-cum* of the park-girt palace or the river-side villa; or, on the other, the stern, joyless life of the galley-slave, all comprised in the one word—Work.

Attended by the secretaries, the Governor-General meets the members of Council on certain given days—say twice—in every week. All the multiform concerns of Government requiring adjustment in the different departments of state—in the political, the military, the financial, the judicial, &c.—are then cursorily discussed and decided. But the real business is done at home, on the other days of the week, when the Government messengers are continually presenting themselves at the houses of the members of Council, bearing certain official-looking, oblong boxes, containing state-papers to be examined and minuted by the Councillors. Rough-hewn by the secretaries, important despatches, or minutes and memoranda on which despatches are to be based, are sent round for inspection and approval. Then the member of Council either writes his initials on the draft and passes it on without further comment,

or he seats himself down to his desk, and draws up an elaborate minute on the subject. These minutes take the place of speeches delivered by members of popular assemblies. They contain an expression of the individual opinions of the writer, supported by such facts and such arguments as he can bring to his aid. Thus is it, as was said by a distinguished living statesman, that "eloquence evaporates in scores of paragraphs." But the paragraphs have often more of "eloquence" in them than the halting sentences which make up the oral discourses which would appropriate the name. Now, it is just in proportion as the contents of these boxes of state-papers are examined and commented upon by the member of Council, that his life is one of dignified ease or interminable toil. Metcalfe soon found that his was the latter.

He had a habit, on all occasions, of thinking for himself. It was a habit formed very early in life, which had grown with his growth and strengthened with his strength, and was not now, at the age of forty-three, to be eradicated. He had always been a laborious man of business. He shrunk from no amount of personal toil. He gave himself heart and soul to the public service; and he believed that it was his duty to work as long as there was any work to perform. When he entered the Supreme Council he determined to take his stand upon his own knowledge and experience and sense of right—not to be the servile follower of governors-general, or the passive tool of secretaries—but an independent member of the Government, freely expressing his own opinions, and never becoming, even ministerially, participatory in wrong, without emphatically protesting against it. He wrote, therefore, a great number of minutes. He was often, too, in the minority; but he said that he could not command success, and that he was not to do his duty less steadfastly because the pursuit of it often involved him in failure.

As he had a high sense of his official duties, so also his social obligations as a member of the Government were not lightly regarded. He looked upon the exercise of hospitality not as a virtue in his elevated position, but as a duty which it was incumbent on him to discharge. His spacious residence at Garden-Reach—that beautiful river-side suburb, with its white villas and its green lawns—was continually occupied by strangers, with only some slight claim on his bounty; by passing travellers arriving from, or departing for, England, bearers of letters of introduction to Sir Charles Metcalfe—people for the most part with whom he had little sympathy, but whom he ever entertained as a prince. Then his dinner-parties were the best, and his balls the most numerously attended in Calcutta: and everybody said that such noble hospitality was almost without a parallel even in the most lavish of times.

But all this was, in truth, distasteful to him. It was supposed that he took pleasure in society—that he was happy in a crowd—that he was never more at home than in the banquet-room. But he was continually yearning after the companionship of a few beloved friends, or, failing that solace, after solitude and a book. There was something unsatisfying in this mode of life. He gave himself up wholly to public business and to hospitality, but such was the pressure of the one, that he felt his inability adequately to sustain it, and such were the claims of the other, that he often reproached himself for having insufficiently discharged them. He could not do all that he desired either in one direction or the other, and was incessantly battling, therefore, against time and against space. His letters written at this epoch of his career, in the unreserved confidence of private friendship, indicate, more clearly than anything I can write, what were his habits of life, and what were his inmost feelings:—

"I have several letters from you, and long to write, fully discussing the subjects of their contents as of old; but I find it impossible to indulge in this pleasure. I endeavour to secure time for letter-writing, but cannot obtain enough. My days are portioned, as much as possible, so as to enable me to do everything that I have to do, but in vain. Thursday and Friday are appropriated to Council, and nothing else can be done upon those days. Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday are wholly devoted to the reading of papers that come in, and reading and revising those that go out; but all these are not enough. Saturday I take for writing minutes and revising despatches that go out, but find it too little. . . . . You know how little I have written to you, to other correspondents still less; and yet the number of letters I have to answer is overwhelming. I have been at work for some hours now, but I have still twenty-five letters on my table requiring answers—six or eight from England. The want of time makes me half mad. . . . . To add to my distress, people will have the kindness to breakfast with me. I am six miles away from them, but that is not sufficient. I shut my doors at all other times, come who may. I should be happy in my situation, if I had more time for the performance of my various duties, but the want of it plagues me. The only resource left is to withdraw from society, and to work at night—but I shall tear my eyes to pieces if I do."—[*Feb.* 3, 1828.]

"I have made a great alteration in my mode of despatching my business. I reserve no day for any particular branch, but get over all as well as I can as it comes in. . . . . The bundle of private letters which used to accumulate for the day in the week set apart, was quite overwhelming and insurmountable. I now go pell-mell at all in the ring, and as far as the new method has yet gone, it promises better than the last."—[*March* 8, 1828.]

"It requires a strong conviction of its being a duty, to sustain me in keeping up society. Were I to follow my natural or acquired taste, I should fast sink into habits of seclusion when the company of friends is not obtainable. I have nothing to complain of in society, and am happy enough when in it; but the making up of parties, issuing of invitations, &c., are troublesome operations, which harass me, and frequently drive me from my purpose. My conscience is continually reproaching me with want of hospitality and attention to individuals entitled to them. Many

a man has come to Calcutta and gone from it without once receiving an invitation to my house, which an indescribable something—anything but good-will—has prevented until it was too late. My house, although it has more rooms for entertaining than any other house in Calcutta, is deficient in that kind of room which is requisite in large parties—the ones which, with respect to general society, would answer best for me, as killing all my birds with one stone. I am thinking of building a grand ball-room. It would not, I suppose, cost less, altogether, than 20,000 rupees—a large sum to lay out on another man's property. But I am not sure that it would not be cheaper than giving parties in the Town-hall—my other resource—each of which costs above 8,000 rupees, and cannot, therefore, be often repeated. . . . . I enjoy the society of our house-party very much, retaining, however, my old habits of seclusion from breakfast to dinner, which are seldom broken in upon, except by the Bushbys' children, who trot up frequently to my loft in the third story, where I have my sitting-room and library as well as bedroom—it is, in short, the portion of the house which I keep to myself—and there they make me show them the pictures, &c., being privileged by infancy to supersede all affairs of every kind."—[*May* 18, 1828.]

"There is so little variety in my life at Calcutta, that one week is exactly like another. I continue to feel myself quite alone in the Government. . . . . Nevertheless, matters go on placidly and amicably. I am getting more used to the ways of the secretaries, or they are falling more into my notions. Which it is I can hardly say. Perhaps the former. Either way the effect is the same. I pursue my own course, indifferent to everything but the performance of my duty. I have not made the slightest approach to greater intimacy with any person in Calcutta; excepting a few friends whom I like to see as often as they can come to me; my inclination is very much for solitude. This, however, I am not permitted to indulge in; for it somehow happens that my house is hardly ever without having guests residing in it, under circumstances which render it unavoidable. . . . . I would rather be alone, partly from a preference for solitude, and partly because plans of study which, during a short interval in which I had the house to myself, I had begun to put in practice, and which owing to my occupations during the day, can only be executed at night, are interrupted by society. The hours which might be fertilized by improvement are wasted in uninteresting sittings after dinner, until the body and mind, both wearied, find

relief, the former in rest and the latter in solitude, in the refreshing stillness of the midnight chamber. I remember the small society, in which hearts communed with each other and happiness never flagged; but what is past is past, and the like will never come again."—[*June* 16, 1828.]

"I wish that I could exchange habits with you, and see as little of strange faces as you do; for the longer I live the less I like strange faces, or any other faces but those of friends whom I love. The parties which have attracted your notice are given as matters of duty proper in my station; and finding that I had not time to issue invitations repeatedly, I have sent them out, once for all, for a ball on the third Monday in every month, which is always a moonlight night. My conscience is satisfied; and if people be amused, I shall derive pleasure myself from that cause. I am in good health and good spirits, but live almost entirely devoid of those sympathies which constitute the delights of life; and, in that respect, am more in mental solitude than yourself, for you, no doubt, find sympathy in some of your books."—[*December* 20, 1828.]

"You know that ever since I went to Hyderabad, I have tried to save my eyes by not working at night. I am no longer able to adhere to that precaution. Business is too heavy, and forces me to encroach on the night. When I am entirely alone, which, however, is very rarely—not, perhaps, a night in a month—I set to seriously, and work away till midnight. When my guests are at home, and I have no party, I take an hour or two before dinner, which, of course, is very late."—[*March* 8, 1829.]

"I am withdrawing myself more and more from public intercourse, and am only wanting an opportunity to shake off the remaining shackles and become entirely a recluse; since neither is the performance of public duty compatible with the waste of time in society, nor is knowledge of men's characters in general compatible with that respect for them without which society has no pleasure in it. I am becoming every day more and more sour and morose and dissatisfied. When you speak of your feelings on your expected return to Delhi, compared with what they were on your first coming there, you remind me—not that reminding is needed, for the recollection is always fresh—of times and scenes and friends, with which and with whom the memory of real heartfelt happiness, which can never return again in the same form, and never perhaps in any form, is closely combined. My

life now is quite different, and without a glimpse of the same enjoyment which we had when so many were united together in bonds of affectionate attachment and habits of continual intercourse. . . . . All my letter-writing now takes place at night; and I am glad when I can get a night to myself for the purpose. On these occasions I avoid a formal dinner, take a sandwich and a pint of claret in the twilight, when too dark to read, in the open air, and take to my desk as soon as candles are lit."—[*March* 28, 1829.]

But there were other sources of inquietude than these—other regrets than those which expended themselves in yearnings after the companionship of beloved friends. Metcalfe felt at this time not as a man only, but as a statesman also, that he was "a lonely being in Calcutta." It grieved him to find how little his colleagues in the Government could enter into his views, and share his opinions on public questions. It were better to record what he himself wrote regarding this diversity of sentiment than to speculate on its causes. The following extracts from his private letters written in 1828-29, relate mainly to this subject:—

"I am at war with my colleagues on the opium question; and mean to fight to the last. My latest minute remains unanswered, probably from want of time, and the question is still under discussion. As yet, the majority are declaredly against me; but to borrow M——'s expression, they have not a leg to stand on—not one among them all. Whatever the issue may be here, I feel that in argument I cannot be otherwise than triumphant. . . . . I see nothing to prevent our being in England together some years hence, but the injury it might do to you—in England, and over Europe too during the recesses of Parliament; for I am more than ever bent on making Parliament my field of action."—[*Feb.* 10, 1828.]

"I find myself a lonely being in Calcutta. I do not mean as to general society. I both give and attend parties occasionally—but the habit is becoming less frequent as the cold weather departs, and I am already more myself than I used to be. But when I said I was lonely, I meant as to my feelings, and this more especially

in my official situation. . . . . I am personally on good terms with my colleagues, although nearly provoked once or twice into heat. But the long and the short of it is, that I stand quite alone among them, and feel that I am not likely ever to be otherwise; and that, in fact, every day tends to widen the separation. This conviction operates on my conduct. I am getting more and more into the habit of regarding co-operation as a thing not to be expected, and of putting forth my sentiments in minutes, to take their chance of making their way or not. I write more and read council papers less, for it is impossible to do both. Out of Council the prospect is not more brilliant. I am regarded as a relentless hewer and hacker of expenditure, and am sensible of black and sour looks in consequence. Still, I am well and happy! I feel that I stand alone; but I also feel that I know the path of duty, and am endeavouring to pursue it. Our expenditure exceeds our income by more than a crore of rupees (a million sterling). The Government which allows this to go on in time of peace deserves any punishment. The Government of which I am a part *shall* not allow it The cause gives me irresistible power, and I will force others to do their duty. With all this, I have to defend, and struggle for, good soldiers, whom others would turn adrift; and here, perhaps, I shall ultimately fail, although as yet I have succeeded in delaying their fate against a majority bent on disbanding them. . . . . This, perhaps, is silly boasting. It is, however, what I feel. . . . . .

"I have the detailed statement of our expenditure at the three Presidencies on my table, from which I am making notes; and I have half-a-dozen minutes in my head, jostling each other to get out. It is some pain to me to write; for a horse fell with me some weeks ago, and I hurt my wrist. It did not trouble me so much at first as it does now, and as yet it is getting worse. I was thrown some time before that and hurt my back. This comes of *trying* to ride. I still persevere, and ride every morning, but I shall probably give it up if I fall again."—[*March* 8, 1828.]

"I look to the new Governor-General's coming with some curiosity, but without any sanguine expectations. If I find that he has a heart for the public welfare, I will follow him and support him with all my soul; if not, I will continue to perform my own duty with or without success, as at present, and stand alone, as I now do."—[*April* 6, 1828.]

The new Governor-General, whose coming was looked to with some curiosity, was Lord William Bentinck. Lord Amherst had already laid down the reins of government, and the arrival of his successor was daily expected. The Governor-General elect was not an untried man; but twenty years had elapsed since he had presided over the administration of Madras, and little was known of him except that he was a man of liberal views and independent character. This little, however, made Metcalfe sanguine that they would work together harmoniously for the public good. But, for a time, he was disappointed. On the 4th of July Lord William Bentinck was sworn in as Governor-General of India. Metcalfe soon saw good reason to admire his character; but he found, at first, that they did not approximate—that there was little sympathy between them—and this, he said, "rather surprised him." He suspected that Lord William had arrived in India with some foregone conclusions not favourable to his colleague—that the unforgotten Hyderabad discussions had been converted to malicious uses by his enemies—and that the new Governor-General had been designedly prejudiced against him. His letters clearly tell what he felt regarding a man, whom he then admired and whom afterwards he loved. The coldness was but brief between them:—

"I like the little that I have seen," wrote Metcalfe, "of our new Governor-General very much—he is a straightforward, honest, upright, benevolent, sensible man, who will, I trust, have the interests of the State at heart; at least, he seems disposed to inquire and think for himself, and to avoid falling under any one's influence."—[*July* 22, 1828.]

"He is a very benevolent, unaffected, open, candid, kind man, whom every one, I conceive, must like. What he will eventually prove as a Governor-General, I will not undertake to prophesy. At present he seems to seek information, to have the public good at heart, and to be convinced of the necessity of reducing expenditure within income, which is all right. Lady William is a most engaging woman."—[*September* 2, 1828.]

"I continue to like the Governor-General, as being an upright, honourable man, with the best intentions, and much good sense. . . . I expect good from his administration. He and I do not approximate, which is rather surprising to me, for many of our sentiments are in common with both of us, and there would be no objection on my part to greater intimacy, although the advances could not with propriety be on my side. I am not sure whether we are kept asunder by any dislike he may have conceived of me, or by his own natural reserve. I suspect that he is on the wrong side on the Hyderabad question; and that this may prove a subject of contention between us." . . . . I can collect from other quarters that Sir William Rumbold's party (for, strange to say, if anything be strange, this man's party exists, both in the Court of Directors and the Board of Control, and is predominant in the latter) was active in their attempt to work on his lordship. My suspicion as to his disposition on the subject is caused by his total silence towards me regarding it, which, all circumstances considered, is certainly remarkable, and can only be explained, in my opinion, by supposing either that he entertains sentiments opposite to what are known to be mine, or that he affects to consider me a party in the matter between whom and Sir William Rumbold he is to judge equitably, which alone is a prejudging of the case, and the fear of appearing to be biassed by me will probably affect his conduct. The test is close at hand; for Sir William Rumbold's application for permission to return to Hyderabad, which, however, he treats as a matter of course, comes before Council to-morrow. It will, I think, be granted. I shall object to it, and am prepared to fight, if it be necessary. Lord William has never read the Hyderabad papers, deterred by the size of the volume. I shall be sorry to come to dissension with him; but I cannot sacrifice the right cause. We shall see to-morrow what his bent is. My resolution in this and in all other matters that may go against the grain with me is to do my duty, and keep myself as happy and as unruffled as my constitution will allow me to be."—[*December* 2, 1828.]

"I am puzzled to understand why I am so completely alone in my thoughts. Take the Governor-General. . . . . I cannot help thinking that if he understood me, we should naturally approximate. As it is, he appears to me to prefer any one's opinion to mine. This forces me, as I cannot consent to be driven from the discharge of my duty by slight to record dissentient opinions, in minutes, more frequently than would be

necessary if we could co-operate with more sympathy. I fear that there is a want of suavity, or a want of blandness, or some other defect about me, that is not palatable. . . . . I should add, that there is nothing personally offensive in Lord William's demeanour. There is nothing whatever to object to in that respect: But the difference between what is and what might be, in public co-operation and mutual confidence, is undeniable."—[*December* 20, 1828.]

It is well known that one of the first acts of Lord William Bentinck's Government was to issue an order, familiarly described as the "Half-batta Order," for the reduction, within certain local limits, of the allowances previously enjoyed by the officers of the army. It was part of a scheme of economy which the Court of Directors conceived to be necessary, and which the new Governor-General pledged himself to carry into effect. Whatever may have been the justice or the injustice of the regulation, the members of Council had no power to resist it. It was pre-ordained by the home authorities; and the local functionaries were only ministerially concerned in the perpetration of this unpopular act. But it was noised abroad that Metcalfe had supported the measure. He had always been a favourite with the military classes; he had always largely associated with them in private, and in public upheld their claims. All his life he had been contending for the necessity of maintaining, by all possible means, the efficiency of our military establishments. He had been called, indeed, the "Friend of the Army;" but now, he was assailed as a traitor, as one who had struck the deadliest blow at the body which he had once cherished. From different parts of the country came letters, written by his private friends, telling him how rife was the report everywhere, and seeking his permission authoritatively to contradict it. How little he deserved the obloquy which was cast upon him, may be gathered from one of his private letters, written in the spring of 1829:—

"An unaccountable report has been circulated and believed, that Bayley opposed, and that I advocated, the execution of the Court of Directors' Half-batta Order; and that, but for me, it would not have been carried into effect. The report, in every part, is totally devoid of foundation. Neither did Bayley oppose, nor did I advocate—neither did I cause nor could I have prevented—the measure. The order was one which could not have been disobeyed, unless we could tell the Court that we are supreme and they subordinate. My sentiments on the subject are recorded, with a view, if possible, to get the order rescinded; but I think it very probable that they will not be relished by the higher powers. In the mean while, the report above noticed has utterly ruined the *ci-devânt* 'Friend of the Army' in the estimation of that exasperated body, and has helped to show him practically how worthless that is which the breath of rumour can destroy; and yet it is this which men are most ambitious of in this world of silliness."—[*March* 8, 1829.]

It had been the intention of Lord William Bentinck to have removed, for a time, in the course of the year 1829, the seat of Government from Calcutta to the Upper Provinces; but the proposed measure found little favour at home, and the project had been abandoned. Still, as the year advanced, the Governor-General encouraged the idea of carrying out, in a modified form, his original intentions; and it was designed that Sir Charles Metcalfe should accompany him on his tour to Upper India. On this subject he wrote to the same correspondent:*

"The plan of taking the Government bodily to the North-Western Provinces is abandoned. But I am still to accompany the Governor-General. The Commander-in-Chief and my colleague, Bayley, will form 'Vice-President in Council' in Calcutta.

* Lieut. William Hislop. I can find no later letter addressed to this cherished correspondent. Not long afterwards he was carried off by one of the diseases of the country. He was the son of Sir Thomas Hislop, who had done such good service in the war of 1817-18, and a young officer of very high promise. He was rapidly rising in the diplomatic line when death deprived the country of his services.

I like the arrangement, because I consider the proper place for a councillor to be with the Governor-General; and I shall see some friends; and look upon change of air and scene as good for my health. In other respects, it does not promise much delight. I am not more intimate with Lord William than I was on the day of his arrival. I have not a friend in the whole party. Some I rather like, and some I rather dislike; but with any I see no chance of drawing much together, and expect to be in a great measure alone during the trip."—[*July* 5, 1829.]

But this arrangement, like the larger one, was subsequently abandoned. Lord William Bentinck commenced his tour in the Upper Provinces, attended only by some members of the Secretariat and his personal staff. Mr. Bayley became Deputy-Governor and Vice-President in Council; and Sir Charles Metcalfe remained with him in Calcutta to carry on the current business of internal administration.

The approximation which Metcalfe had so much desired had before this auspiciously commenced. Lord William Bentinck and Sir Charles Metcalfe were men who, in spite of some diversities of personal character, had too much in common not to admire and to honour, when they understood one another; and the strongest and most lasting friendships are often those which are preceded by some introductory reserve. The new Governor-General had little external warmth; and Metcalfe was at first pained and disappointed by his coldness of manner. If Lord William Bentinck had arrived in India with any foregone conclusions hostile to his colleague, they were soon discarded as unworthy prejudices utterly at variance with his growing experience of the fine qualities of the man. There was the same simplicity of character, the same honesty of purpose, the same strength of resolution—in a word, the same manliness of character in them both; and Metcalfe soon ceased to complain that they did not draw towards each other. Before the Governor-General com-

menced his first tour to the Upper Provinces, a friendship had grown up between the two statesmen which nothing but death could terminate or diminish. The correspondence between them, from this time, was close and familiar. It seems, as far as I have been able to trace it, to have had a most auspicious commencement. Before his departure from Calcutta, the Governor-General had received from Lord Ellenborough, who then presided at the India Board, a letter written in the best early manner of that statesman —a letter containing, as Lord William Bentinck truly said, the most "benevolent and excellent sentiments." In it he "expressed an anxious desire to promote by every means in his power the welfare and happiness of the great Indian population;" and he called upon the Governor-General for "an unreserved communication of any sentiments or suggestions he might have to offer in furtherance of Lord Ellenborough's truly sound and statesmanlike views."* "Anxious I must be," continued Lord William Bentinck, "to answer to this call, but sensible at the same time of my own incompetency to the task, I can only

* These are Lord William Bentinck's words. I cannot deny myself the pleasure of quoting the passages in Lord Ellenborough's letter to which he especially refers:—"We must bring the total expenditure, here and in India, within the income, and so much within the income as to be enabled to reduce taxation. India cannot rise under the pressure of present taxation, and to make the people of that country consumers of the manufactures of England, we must first make them *rich*. That object is remote, indeed, but we must endeavour to attain it." And again:—"We have a great moral duty to perform to the people of India. We must, if possible, give them a good and permanent government. In doing this, we confer a greater benefit upon the people of this country than in sacrificing the interests of India to the apparent present interests of England. The real interests of both countries are the same. The convulsion which would dissolve their connection would entail much loss upon us, and bring desolation upon India."

obtain the information Lord Ellenborough wants by recourse to greater experience and knowledge. In this difficulty, I confidently apply to you for that assistance which no man in India is better able to afford."* If anything could have brought the two statesmen together, it would have been such an appeal as this. They soon found that they had a common interest in the happiness of the people, and that they could labour earnestly and diligently together in the same great cause.

It has been said that on the departure of the Governor-General for Upper India, the charge of the local Government devolved on Mr. Butterworth Bayley. But on the 11th of November, that long-tried and excellent public servant, having completed his appointed time in Council, ceased to be a member of the Government, and prepared to return to England. Sir Charles Metcalfe then became Deputy-Governor and President of the Council; and Mr. Blunt, who had been provisionally appointed, became Metcalfe's colleague in the Government. Captain John Sutherland, who had served under Metcalfe in Hyderabad, and subsequently accompanied him to Bhurtpore, was appointed Private Secretary to the Deputy-Governor; and Lieutenant J. M. Higginson,† whom he had first met in 1826 in the trenches before Bhurtpore, and who subsequently, in Lord W. Bentinck's family, had perpetuated the favourable impression then made on Metcalfe's mind, became also a member of his personal staff.

At this time Mr. Lushington, a Madras civilian, occupied the chair at that Presidency; and Sir John Malcolm, a Madras officer, was Governor of Bombay. The Anglo-Indian public, who had also seen Thomas Munro and

* *Lord W. Bentinck to Sir Charles Metcalfe, September* 16, 1829.—It is greatly to be regretted that I have not in my possession Metcalfe's answer to this letter.

† Now (1858) Sir J. M. Higginson, Governor of the Mauritius.

Mountstuart Elphinstone in those situations, had begun to look upon them as the natural rewards of distinguished merit displayed in the service of the Company. And it was rumoured in the course of 1830, that Metcalfe would be appointed to succeed Sir John Malcolm at Bombay. Rumours of all kinds are always sufficiently rife in Calcutta; and there does not appear to have been any better foundation for this than the undeniable fact, that the appointment would have been a good one. If the idea were ever encouraged in the high places of Government, it does not seem to have taken any tangible shape or substance; and it was soon known in Calcutta that Lord Clare had been appointed Governor of Bombay.

But another opportunity of rewarding Metcalfe's services, and at the same time of conferring substantial benefits on the country, was soon about to present itself. In the course of 1831, it was known that the Government of Madras would soon be vacated by Mr. Lushington. A successor was, therefore, to be appointed; and it was not doubted that a most worthy and a most efficient one could be found in Sir Charles Metcalfe. He had many friends and many admirers in the Court of Directors. Mr. Ravenshaw, the Deputy-Chairman, wrote out to Lord William Bentinck, that he had suggested the appointment to the President of the India Board, and had good hope that it would be carried into effect.* But when the time came for the appointment to be officially made, the Government

* On the 24th of November, 1831, Mr. Ravenshaw, then Deputy-Chairman of the Court of Directors, wrote privately to Lord William Bentinck: "I quite agree with you about Metcalfe. I believe I told you that I had urged the Chairman to give him the option of remaining in Council, and I am now in great hopes that this will be done. I have also suggested him in the same quarter, as well as to Mr. Grant, as the most fit man in India to take the chair at Madras; and I doubt much if so fit a man can be found here."

was conferred upon Sir Frederick Adam, an old soldier of high repute, who had rendered services to his country worthy of reward, but whose antecedents had not especially qualified him for the administration of Indian affairs.

The outer history of this transaction is, that Sir Charles Metcalfe "could not be spared from Bengal."* The inner history is, that very powerful interest was set at work to secure the nomination of Sir Frederick Adam. It is understood that the guardian of his Majesty's conscience felt no prickings of his own, when he exerted himself to push the son of an old Scotch friend into the place which the ablest Indian statesman of the day stood ready prepared to occupy. After the appointment had taken place, it transpired at the India House that the President of the India Board—Mr. Charles Grant—was not unwilling to support the nomination of Sir Charles Metcalfe. And there were members of the Court who, had they been aware of this disposition, would have done battle in behalf of their own

* On the 26th of March, 1802, Mr. Tucker wrote to Sir Charles Metcalfe:—"Sir F. Adam goes to Madras. I had, at one time, hopes that you might have been proposed for this Government; but there were several candidates, and an interest which has long been powerful here and elsewhere in the end prevailed." And on the 30th, announcing that the appointment had actually taken place, he added: "I did not think it prudent to bring forward your name (although it had been under consideration), because the interest of Sir Frederick Adam was so powerful as to ensure success, and because even some of those who were connected with that interest were of opinion that you could not be spared from Bengal, while others are adverse to the appointment of Company's servants to the situation of governors." The plea that Metcalfe could not be spared from Bengal was put forward more specifically by Mr. Ravenshaw, who wrote on the 4th of April: "It may be satisfactory to Sir Charles Metcalfe to know that it was the high value set upon his services in Bengal which alone prevented his nomination to the Government of Madras. This you will say is hard upon him, but it was thought here that private feelings ought to yield to the public good."

servant. But somehow or other, a higher influence than that of the India Board carried everything before it. The idea that Metcalfe could not be spared from Bengal seems to have taken root just where it was intended. And honest men really believed that they were promoting the best interests of the country committed to their care when they were unconsciously yielding to the influence of a brotherhood of Scotch lawyers.

But although the Government of Madras was not conferred on Sir Charles Metcalfe, the East India Company were enabled at this time to mark their high sense of his character and conduct by an act of grace with which the King's ministers had no constitutional authority to interfere. In August, 1832, his five years' tenure of office as a member of Council would expire; but it was competent for the Court of Directors to renew his lease of a seat at the Government Board. To have suffered this period to expire without extending it, or appointing Metcalfe to some higher office, would have been to have lost his services altogether. And this India could not well afford. Moreover, there were some great changes looming in the distance, which rendered it especially desirable that so ripe a statesman, as the senior member of Council should not depart from India. On the 16th of September, 1831, Lord William Bentinck had written to Mr. Charles Grant, who by this time had succeeded Lord Ellenborough at the India Board, saying, "Sir Charles Metcalfe will be a great loss to me. His service in Council expires in August. He quite ranks with Sir Thomas Munro, Sir John Malcolm, and Mr. Elphinstone. If it be intended—and the necessity cannot admit of a doubt—to form a second local Government in Bengal,* he undoubtedly ought to be at the head. I strongly recommend him.

* That is, to divide the old Bengal Presidency.

Whilst he has always maintained the most perfect independence of character and conduct, he has been to me a most zealous supporter and friendly colleague." Whether the East India Company had at this time fixed their regards upon Sir Charles Metcalfe as the future head of the new Government, I do not know. With reference to such an arrangement, it was doubtless expedient that he should remain at his post. But whether there were any prospective object or not in the measure, on the 14th of December, 1831, it was resolved at a Court of Directors, "that Sir Charles Theophilus Metcalfe, who succeeded as a member of the Bengal Council on the 24th of August, 1827, and whose period of service under the Court's resolution of the 1st of April, 1801, will expire on the 24th of August, 1832, be continued in Council for the further term of two years from the expiration of such period." The vote was carried with acclamation. It seemed but a poor recompense for the loss of the Madras Government; but either one or the other, as far as he was swayed by mere personal considerations, would have been regarded by him with unconcern. His thoughts had for some time been turning homewards. He had been dreaming again and again of the seat in Parliament. He still believed that on that arena he would gain higher distinction than any he had gained in India. And it would not have troubled him if his old masters had not sought a renewal of his service. Still the extension of his time in Council *was* an honour; and such was his sense of the claims of the public service, that if his continuance in India had been far more irksome than it really was, he would have cheerfully consented, under any circumstances of personal sacrifice, to remain at his post.

Sir Charles Metcalfe was, for nearly seven years, a member of the Supreme Council of India; and throughout this period he continually resided in Calcutta, or the near

neighbourhood. During the first years of his residence at the Presidency he occupied a house on the banks of the river, at Garden Reach. He subsequently removed to Allipore, a more inland suburb, taking up his abode at Government House during the absence of the Governor-General, and spending occasional brief intervals of rustication at Barrackpore.* Throughout all this period he enlivened Calcutta with magnificent hospitality. He was in the enjoyment of almost uninterrupted health; and he appears to have been cheerful and contented. The want which he mostly lamented was the want of leisure. He had little to devote to his books. Except from time to time, on the way to and from Barrackpore, when a volume of some favourite author—often a classical one—was his companion, the gratification of his love of general reading was almost wholly denied to him. He lived continually in harness—official and social. He rarely, until the business of the day was done, went beyond the limits of his own premises. His house at Allipore was surrounded by spacious park-like grounds, and at early morning he might sometimes be seen riding in top-boots, an article of equipment in which he always rejoiced, on a plump white horse, with a groom upon either side of him. His labours commenced every morning at seven o'clock. From nine to twelve he devoted to breakfast and the reception of visitors. For the most part they were visits of business. From twelve to seven he was continually at work, and frequently when at home, with no social claims upon him, returned to business after dinner. But in spite of these exhausting labours in a most exhausting climate, he never seemed to be exhausted. When he appeared at the dinner-table in the evening he was cheerful, animated, and entertaining;

* A large military cantonment sixteen miles from Calcutta, where the Governor-General has a country residence on the banks of the Hooghly.

always courteous, affable, and good-natured; very tolerant of the dulness of other men; with himself, a strong disposition to be mirthful within the limits of becoming mirth. The brisk sallies of indifferent wit with which he enlivened society are still remembered by many who remember little else regarding him. But there are some who cherish a pleasant recollection of his Saturday dinner-parties, at which the conversation, for the most part of a liberal character, was of a higher tone than ordinarily distinguishes the *burra-khanas* of Calcutta; and Metcalfe's own share in it, untinged by the least love of display, was remarkable for the strong good sense, and sometimes for the almost prophetic sagacity, that informed it.

But the real history of his life at this time is to be found among his papers, the original drafts of which are now before me. They indicate, in a very striking manner, both the laboriousness and the conscientiousness of the man. There was scarcely a subject connected with the whole question of our position in India to the elucidation of which he did not address himself in an elaborate minute. He was not a wordy writer. He went straight to the point—in a few pregnant sentences stated his opinions—and then proceeded to support them with a goodly array of facts and arguments. There was a straightforwardness of manner in all his writings which, if it did not always carry conviction with it, at all events impressed the reader with a strong sense of the earnestness and sincerity of his utterances. There were no shams and pretences about them. He was not capable of any kind of trickery or chicanery. He erred, as do all men; but when he erred, there was always a soul of goodness in the evil of his error.

During the first years of Sir Charles Metcalfe's occupancy of the seat at the Council Board, the attention of himself and his colleagues was mainly given to matters of

economical reform. The expenditure of the Company was exceeding their revenue; and this Metcalfe at once pronounced an evil, to the remedy of which it was primarily necessary to devote all the energies of Government. There was a time when the ardour and impetuosity of the young statesman had chafed under all sorts of financial restraints. When a young political assistant in Lord Lake's camp, he had combated the sober opinions of Sherer, the accountant; and at a later period, in the camp of Lord Hastings, had written elaborate minutes for the Governor-General, intended to reason down the economical arguments of Edmonstone and Dowdeswell, and their supporters at home. But he had now become one of the holders of the public purse; age and experience had brought with them the wonted growth of financial prudence; and he stood forth an economist among economists. A considerable proportion of his earlier minutes were devoted to questions of financial reform. But true to the faith of his younger days, he always consistently opposed any diminution of our means of military defence. Some of his papers on the necessity of maintaining in India efficient war-establishments at all times, whatever might be the aspect of the political horizon, are masterpieces of argumentative statesmanship. But they were based upon what was long believed to be an exaggerated idea of the insecurity of our position in India. He was wont familiarly to say, that we were sitting on a barrel of gunpowder, and that the explosion might take place any day when we were least expecting it. His writings, public and private, whenever they touched upon the general question of our rule in the East, were all more or less pervaded by this one leading idea. He was, to use his own words, ever "anxiously alive to the instability of our Indian empire."

Convinced as he was that the continued tenure of our Indian possessions was entirely dependent upon the

efficiency of our war-establishments, he contended against every proposed diminution of our means of defence. But in proportion to the clearness with which he recognised the necessity of an undiminished expenditure in that one direction, was the zeal with which he pushed his proposals for retrenchment in every other quarter. He used to say half jestingly, half sorrowfully, that he was afraid his colleagues would regard him as a Goth. He was sceptical, indeed, of the advantages to be derived by the people of India from some of those grand material improvements on which in these days the greatest possible stress is wisely and properly laid, as agents of enlightenment and civilization. It must not be forgotten, however, that a quarter of a century of the most wonderful progress that the world has ever seen, has elapsed since Charles Metcalfe, who was in many respects before the age in which he lived, wrote and recorded minutes questioning the benefits to be conferred on India by steam-ships, telegraphs, and roads.

In these departments and in many others—as mints, surveys, and grants to the Agricultural Society, he initiated proposals for a reduction of expenditure. He was eager to pare the exuberance of all costly overgrown establishments, and to abolish all offices of questionable advantage to the state. In India there are no sinecures, or Metcalfe would have laid the axe to the root of them with an unsparing hand; but there is here and there an occasional distribution of offices to which the process of consolidation may be beneficially applied; and this Metcalfe was not slow to recommend. His own privileged service was not the one to which he would have applied the knife with the tenderest hand.

The years of Metcalfe's connection with the Supreme Government of India were emphatically years of financial reform. They were also distinguished by considerable

domestic improvement, and the progressive diffusion of liberal principles among the governing classes. It was a period of unwonted tranquillity. Affairs of internal administration were not made to give place in the minds of our statesmen to the urgencies of warlike preparation. The wheels of Government moved quietly round; but the progress of the great machine was certain. What were Metcalfe's opinions regarding many of the vexed questions of Indian administration which came before the Government at this time—questions some of which have been since set at rest—may be gathered from the following extracts from his minutes:—*

"ABSENCE OF THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL FROM HIS COUNCIL.—I am thoroughly convinced, that whenever the public service requires the protracted absence of the Governor-General from the Presidency, excepting in the cases of his proceeding to another Presidency, or commanding an army in the field, he ought to be accompanied by the Council. In other words, that the Government ought in any case to remain united, and as complete as possible, and not be divided into separate authorities acting with ill-defined relative powers. . . . . If it is salutary that the Governor-General should have a Council to aid him in the ordinary transactions of Government at the Presidency, it must be salutary also that he should have the same assistance when called to a distant part by important exigencies of the public service. It is to be remembered that the Governor-General carries in his own person the Supreme Government; and the practice has always been, during the absence of the Governor-General from the Presidency, that matters of peace and war and political negotiation—matters on which our existence as a power in India may at any time depend—are under his peculiar and exclusive control. How can it be that the same law which has declared the deliberation of a Council to be necessary for the administration of his Government in the most ordinary affairs, should mean unneces-

* The passages cited are intended merely to show the bare opinions of Sir Charles Metcalfe on the subjects to which they relate. They convey little idea of his literary style, or of the logical arrangement of his arguments.

sarily to deprive him of that assistance, or to remove that check, when the most important measures are to be undertaken?"—[*March* 5, 1830.]

"VILLAGE SETTLEMENTS AND RYOTWAR SETTLEMENTS.—I admire the structure of the village communities, and am apprehensive that direct engagements for revenue with each separate landholder or cultivator in a village, might tend to destroy its constitution.

"The village communities are little republics, having nearly everything that they want within themselves, and almost independent of any foreign relations. They seem to last where nothing else lasts. Dynasty after dynasty tumbles down. Revolution succeeds to revolution. Hindoo, Patan, Mogul, Mahratta, Sikh, English, are all masters in turn, but the village communities remain the same. In times of trouble they arm and fortify themselves. An hostile army passes through the country. The village communities collect their cattle within their walls, and let the enemy pass unprovoked. If plunder and devastation be directed against themselves, and the force employed be irresistible, they flee to friendly villages at a distance, but when the storm has passed over they return and resume their occupations. If a country remain for a series of years the scene of continued pillage and massacre, so that the villages cannot be inhabited, the scattered villagers nevertheless return whenever the power of peaceable possession revives. A generation may pass away, but the succeeding generation will return. The sons will take the places of their fathers—the same site for the village, the same positions for the houses, the same lands will be re-occupied by the descendants of those who were driven out when the village was depopulated; and it is not a trifling matter that will drive them out, for they will often maintain their post through times of disturbance and convulsion, and acquire strength sufficient to resist pillage and oppression with success.

"This union of the village communities, each one forming a separate little state in itself, has, I conceive, contributed more than any other cause to the preservation of the people of India, through all the revolutions and changes which they have suffered, and is in a high degree conducive to their happiness and to the enjoyment of a great portion of freedom and independence. I wish, therefore, that the village constitutions may never be disturbed, and I dread everything that has a tendency to break them up. I am fearful that a revenue settlement, separately with each

individual cultivator, as is the practice in the Ryotwar Settlement, instead of one with the village community, through their representatives the head men, might have such a tendency. For this reason, and for this only, I do not desire to see the Ryotwar Settlement generally introduced into the Western Provinces."—[*November* 7, 1830.]

"MACHINERY OF REVENUE AND JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATION.—On the question of the union or separation of the judicial and revenue branches of the public service, I entertain notions entirely in favour of union. Were I myself to venture on a proposal to new-modify our civil administration. I should recommend, as the arrangement in my mind best suited to the character of our native subjects, and best calculated to promote their happiness, the division of the country into small districts, in each of which an European officer should be superintendent, uniting all authorities in his own person, and having under him native officers for the administration of the district in all branches. Several of these districts to be formed into a division, under the control of a superior officer or commissioner, exercising united authority in all branches; and the commissioners to be subordinate to one general superintending authority at the Presidency."

"RIGHTS OF EAST-INDIANS (MIXED RACES) AND NATIVE CHRISTIANS.—I regret the distinctions which exist in laws, rights, privileges, and immunities among the several classes of subjects inhabiting the territory under British rule in India, and I think it desirable that all the exclusions and disabilities under which any class may labour, whether European, East Indian, or native, should be removed and abolished as soon as possible. . . . . The East Indians, although native by birth, and partially by descent, are as much or more European by descent; and by education, habits, manners, and religion, are European and Christian. If, therefore, it be impossible to consider all subjects on an equality, and consequently necessary to assign the East Indians to one class, as distinct from another, instead of being declared natives, they would be more properly, in my opinion, classed with Europeans; or form a class by themselves. . . . . Our legislation in India has been chiefly for Hindoos and Mahomedans, who form the mass of the people, and for whom it has been liberal and careful. But it could never have been intended to exclude native Christians, in matters of justice and law, from privileges granted generally to people of other religions; and it

only remains, I presume, for the Government to rectify whatever omissions have inadvertently occurred."—[*July* 27, 1831.]

"ABOLITION OF SUTTEE.—I cordially concur in the proposed prohibition of the immolation of Hindoo widows on the funeral pyres of their husbands. I do so not without apprehension that the measure may possibly be used by the disaffected, influential, and designing of our subjects to inflame the passions of the multitude and produce a religious excitement, the consequences of which, if once set in action, cannot be foreseen. But there is reasonable ground to hope that it will be submitted to without resistance; and if it be carried into effect tranquilly, and be not made an engine to produce insurrection in the early period of its operation, I have no fear whatever of its causing any danger remotely. It is not of a character to create remotely any bad feeling. Its humane and benevolent motive must be acknowledged by all who are not blinded by religious prejudice. The longer it continues in operation unopposed, the more certainly the Hindoos will become reconciled to it. The longer they see that it is not accompanied by any attack on the venerated rites of their religion, the less they will be alarmed by the apprehension of such an attack. It may, perhaps, be made use of in times of disturbance, like our killing cows, or any other practice offensive to the Hindoos, as a rallying-cry to make common cause among them; but even for that purpose, after its novelty had ceased, it would be less influential than other things already existing, and would not of itself cause any general commotion that would not be as likely to happen, the people being predisposed that way, whether this measure were adopted or not. I expect that the time will come when it will be universally acknowledged by the people of India as the best act performed by the British Government. My only fears, or doubts, are as to its early effects, and those are not so strong as to dissuade me from joining heartily in the suppression of the horrible custom by which so many lives are cruelly sacrificed."—[*November* 14, 1829.]

"THE 'HALF-BATTA ORDER.'—The result of my observations, for twenty-eight years, during which, for the most part, the course of public service that I have followed has led to my associating more with officers of the army of all the three Presidencies than with any other class of society, is a perfect conviction that the allowances of officers on full batta are barely sufficient for their proper support in their several ranks, and do not admit of any

reduction without great suffering. . . . . I do not mean to assert that it is impossible to exist on less. Men must of course contrive to exist according to the allowances which they receive. But I do most seriously mean distinctly to submit as my confirmed opinion that there is no room for equitable reduction in the full allowances of regimental officers, and my belief that very few, if any, entirely escape from debt in any rank below that of field-officer, although exercising the utmost moderation and economy.

I was, therefore, much grieved when we received the orders of the Honourable Court directing the reduction of certain stations of the Bengal army to half-batta allowances. It appeared to me, as it did to the Governor-General and Mr. Bayley, that we could not do otherwise than obey the peremptory orders then received from the supreme authorities in England. . . . . The same considerations induce me to suppose that it is not in our power to revoke these orders. Had I conceived that this Government possessed any discretionary authority on the subject, the execution of that measure would never have received my assent; for it appears to me, with every deference to the high authorities from which it has proceeded, to be extremely unwise and inexpedient, fraught with mischief, and unproductive of any essential good."—[*March* 2, 1829.]

"INTERFERENCE WITH NATIVE STATES.—I should conceive that as long as a state can manage its own intended affairs without our intervention, and without aggression on others, we have no right whatever to interfere. But the right may be acquired when a state, from weakness or mismanagement, is compelled to solicit our aid in its internal affairs. It then becomes a question of policy whether we shall afford the aid sought, and may stipulate for any conditions which we may choose to impose as the price of our aid if we determine to grant it. Provided that the aid which we grant, and the conditions which we require, be not attended with injustice to any other party, we may acquire a similar right of interference when the confusion arising from internal convulsions in a state affects the tranquillity of other states. We are then called upon by our duty of protection to other states to suppress that confusion; and at liberty to impose such obligations as may be deemed necessary to secure the permanence of the tranquillity which we exert ourselves to re-establish. But without causes that render interference a duty consistent with treaty, or such occurrences as warrant a change in our treaties, we are bound to abide by the treaties which exist, and by those generally we

have no right to assume the power of interference."—[*December* 20, 1830.]

"There is nothing in our political administration that requires so much circumspection and caution, and discreet judgment, as interference in the affairs of other states. A single mistake of an agent may cause irreparable mischief, and the power left to agents on such occasions is immense. Almost everything depends on their judgment. The effects of interference are anything but certain. It is not, therefore, a conclusive argument in favour of interference, although it is the best, that we may thereby prevent evil, for on the contrary we are just as likely to create it. I should, indeed, say infinitely more so. And the evil created by interference is generally irremediable. It continually, if not ostensibly, destroys the state to which it is applied; and leaves it only a nominal, if any, existence. As a diplomatic agent, I have had a part in carrying into effect both interfering and non-interfering policy; and the result of my own experience has left two strong impressions on my mind. First, that we ought not to interfere in the internal affairs of other states if we can avoid it; and, secondly, that if we do interfere, we ought to do so decidedly, and to the full extent requisite for the object which we have in view. Our attempts to interfere for the better government of other states have often been wretched failures as to our purpose; but have, nevertheless, had all the bad effects of interference on the states concerned, as well as on the minds of other states. Where interference shall begin, and where end, and to what object it shall be confined, and how that object shall be accomplished, without involving further and unnecessary interference, are all mere points to determine. The question of interference altogether is, indeed, the most difficult of any in Indian policy; but interference is so likely to do evil, and so little certain of doing good, that it ought, I conceive, to be avoided as much as possible."—[*August* 14, 1835.]

"ALIENATIONS OF REVENUE.—Our dominion in India is by conquest; it is naturally disgusting to the inhabitants, and can only be maintained by military force.

"It is our positive duty to render them justice, to respect and protect their rights, and to study their happiness. By the performance of this duty, we may allay and keep dormant their innate disaffection; but the expectation of purchasing their cordial attachment by gratuitous alienations of public revenue would be a vain delusion, sure to be attended with fatal disap-

pointment if the experiment were carried to any great extent, impossible, indeed, to be acted on universally, and useless, insignificant, and incongruous on a small scale.

"We cannot dispense with our lawful revenue. We are even bound to increase it by all just means, in order to meet and keep pace with our excessive and increasing expenditure. On political grounds, therefore, the revenue of an assignment, which has justly lapsed to Government, is of more value, in my opinion, speaking generally, than any probable consequence of the gratuitous continuance of the alienation in perpetuity.

"Decidedly preferring the use of the revenue for the maintenance of our dominion, to any supposed political advantage expected to be derived from its sacrifice, I nevertheless protest against being deemed an enemy to a liberal consideration of just claims, where claims do really exist; but I cannot admit that the mere possession of a gratuitous boon from the Government confers on the heirs of the favoured possessor a claim to its perpetual continuance. When was it ever agreed in England that the grant of a pension for one life, or any number of lives, even in reward of the greatest public services, conferred a claim to its continuance in perpetuity?

"According to the principles which I have endeavoured to explain in this minute, if it rested with me to propose the terms of a reply to the Government of Bombay, or Sir John Malcolm's proposition for levying nuzzurana, I should advocate the transmission of instructions to the following effect:—

"1st. To levy nuzzurana, agreeably to Sir John Malcolm's plan, on all alienations of public revenue acknowledged to be hereditary.

"2nd. To resume, at the period prescribed by the granting or confirming order of the British Government, all alienations which are eventually to lapse to Government.

"3rd. To take into consideration all doubtful cases, and deal with them according to the instructions prescribed for that of the two above-mentioned classes to which they may most justly be assigned."—[*October* 26, 1828.]

"CONNECTION OF GOVERNMENT SERVANTS WITH THE PRESS.—I have the honour to concur in the Governor-General's proposal for the nomination of Mr. Grant to be Superintendent of the Government Press; and I trust that the reasons which induce his lordship to recommend this deviation from the orders of the Court of Directors will satisfy the Honourable Court of its expediency.

"I cannot refrain from availing myself of this opportunity to express my regret at the tenor of those orders, which entirely

exclude the servants of the Company from any share in the exercise of the power of the Press.

"That no person in high official station should have any share in the profits of a newspaper, or any connection whatever with the political Press, seems to be perfectly proper and unquestionable.

"But that the only class of persons who feel any interest in the Company's government should be utterly precluded from the employment of their talents in the operations of the Press, appears to be very impolitic.

"The Press in India, although not free from restrictions, is sufficiently free to make it desirable that it should not fall exclusively into the hands of those who, however loyal as British subjects, are disaffected towards the Honourable Company; and that it will be generally engrossed by such persons must be the natural effect of precluding the servants of the Company from taking any share in it.

"Since the enactment of the local law by which newspapers are printed under a license, revocable at pleasure, the proprietors and editors being responsible for the contents, it has been found expedient to admit a considerable latitude of discussion; nor can this be avoided without adopting one of two courses—either employing the extreme measure of extinction on every construed breach of regulation, which would be harsh and excite popular disgust, or entering into a continual expostulatory and inculpatory correspondence with the editors, which would be quite derogatory and disreputable to the Government, and much more likely to bring it into ridicule and contempt than any freedom of discussion.

"I take it as universally granted that the Press ought to be free, and subject of course to the laws, provided that it be not dangerous to the stability of our Indian Empire.

"Should it ever threaten to become so, the local Government ought undoubtedly to possess the power of protecting the safety of the State against this or any other danger, from whatever quarter it may proceed; because it is impossible in this distant region that we can be protected on emergency by any enactments of the mother country.

"But at present there is no symptom of danger from the freedom of the Press in the hands of either Europeans or natives; and the power being reserved to provide for the public safety against any danger by which it may at any time be menaced, to crush what is in itself capable of great good from an apprehension that it may possibly under circumstances as yet unconceived be converted into

an evil, would be a forecast more honoured in the breach than the observance.

"Arguing, therefore, on the supposition that the Press is already in some degree free, and that it is not desirable to strangle its growing liberty, the exclusion of the Company's servants from taking a share in the exercise of the power which that engine wields, appears to me to be the very reverse of expedient; and I much regret that the orders of the Court of Directors have not left employment in the Press open to all their servants, excepting those in high official stations, and especially to gentlemen in the medical line, on the indispensable condition that such employment should not be allowed to interfere with the due discharge of public duties."—[*December* 29, 1828.]

"USE OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN COURTS OF JUSTICE.—The English language seems to be the channel through which we are most likely to convey improvement to the natives of India. I should, therefore, be disposed to promote the use of it as much as possible in our courts of justice.

"The Persian, like the English, is a foreign language in India, but having preceded the latter by some centuries, and having been made the writing language of State business by the conquerors who introduced it, is now familiar to the generality of well-educated persons; and the present race of native public servants must pass away, and be succeeded by another differently educated, before the Persian can be superseded generally in our courts by the English language.

"Which shall ultimately be the official language for records is a matter of choice between two, as to India, foreign languages; and considering that the English can supply more knowledge than the Persian, it deserves to be the favourite, besides having a claim as the language of the governors of the country; oral pleadings and the examination of witnesses must proceed as now in the vernacular tongue. For record, they may as well be translated into English as into Persian, when the public officers have a sufficient acquaintance with the former.

"There is one part of our judicial proceedings which ought always, I conceive, to originate in English—that is, whatever written order emanates from the European judge. He ought to write it with his own hand, and from his own head, in the language in which he can best express himself, which will of course be his own. As long as the rest of the records are kept in Persian, the judge's English order, containing his own reasoning, might be

accompanied by a Persian translation prepared under his direction."—[*May* 12, 1832.]

"PERSIA AND RUSSIA.—With respect to our influence, or that of Russia, in Persia—the influence of Russia is that of a power which the Persian Court fears and hates; and to which the disaffected in Persia look for change and revolution. Whenever, therefore, Russia has a point to carry, for which she is ready to employ her arms, her influence must be irresistible; and she must at all times have the influence naturally belonging to a mighty power, whose support would give preponderance to any party in the nation. But Russia is the enemy of Persia, and her influence at the Court will be generally that of power and dread, not that of friendship and confidence. Our influence in Persia, if we have any, must be founded on her knowledge of our entertaining friendly dispositions towards her; of her having no immediate cause of fear from our power, and of our having the same interests as herself with regard to the Russians. If, therefore, we had the power of protecting her against Russia, our influence ought to be predominant; but in proportion as we have not that power, and as Persia sees that we have not, our influence must be insignificant.

. . . . Were we even to expect any essential aid from Persia, in the time of our own need, we should most assuredly find ourselves miserably deceived and disappointed. If ever Russia be in a condition to set forth an army against India, Persia most probably will be under her banners."—[*June* 2, 1828.]

". . . . . Time works changes in all things; in empires as well as in smaller affairs. It will work changes in Russia, in Persia, and in India. A few years hence a great difference may take place in the condition of all these countries. Our power in India is not stationary. It will become stronger or weaker. It is now essentially weak; if it does not become stronger, it will scarcely be worth preserving: and it will be hardly possible to preserve it. But whatever may be the state of things at any future period, I cannot imagine the utility of precipitating a hostile collision with Russia; and that, too, in behalf of a power whose good faith in the time of our own need could not be relied on in the slightest degree; and whose utmost aid to us would consist in her own preservation, which she could not probably accomplish against Russia in the event of war, without, or even with, our interference.

"Our true policy, therefore, it seems to me, is to devote our attention to the improvement of our Indian Empire, fostering

its strength, without prematurely going in search of danger, by anticipating its due season.

"What, then, have I to propose regarding our relations with Persia? It is this. To maintain them on the most friendly terms that will not involve us in stipulations likely to lead to an unnecessary war with Russia. There is no necessity for pretending indifference as to the fate of Persia. The interests of Persia and of British India are to a certain degree in unison. We need not conceal that we desire her preservation. We need not hesitate to use our best endeavours to promote it by all means consistent with the maintenance of friendly relations with Russia. Nay, even occasions and events may possibly occur in which it would be politic to afford Persia active assistance against that power. But let us keep ourselves free to do what is wisest and best under all circumstances. Let us not embarrass ourselves by engagements which may be ruinous in their consequences, for which Persia cannot make any adequate return, and which on her part would not be kept one instant beyond their agreement with her own convenience."—[*November* 9, 1828.]

To these opinions Metcalfe steadfastly adhered. He was of opinion that any unnecessary interference in the affairs of Central Asia was to be avoided by all possible means—that the more we endeavoured to counteract supposed dangers, the more certain we were to convert the remote into the proximate, the conjectural into the real; and to bring down upon ourselves the very evils which we were so eager to avert. Before he ceased to be a member of the Supreme Council of India, the affairs of Afghanistan had come incidentally before the Board. He had always been of opinion that the project of opening the navigation of the Indus, encouraged as it was by Lord William Bentinck with purely commercial objects, would result in political entanglements from which we should find it difficult to extricate ourselves. And he recorded a minute deprecating the movement.* As events developed themselves

* In October, 1830. Also another, dated June 2, 1833, deprecating the establishment of a commercial agency in Caubul. Both are given in the volume of selections from Metcalfe's papers.

in Central Asia—as the designs of Russia and the weakness and disunion of the Barukzye brothers became more and more apparent, and our diplomatists in Persia continued to bring the state of affairs in Afghanistan to the notice of the Indian Government, the best course of procedure under the circumstances which had arisen, came to be incidentally discussed in Council.* Mr Henry Ellis had suggested that we might win over Dost Mahomed to our alliance, and secure the object of an efficient barrier against invasion from the West, by supplying the Ameer with arms, money, and perhaps, a few drill-instructors. Mr. Robertson† inclined strongly to this opinion; and Metcalfe, who was of opinion that if the Government were to sanction any kind of interference, the less palpable it were the more prudent, said to him, on the breaking up of Council, after the question had been mooted, "You may depend upon it, that the surest way to draw Russia upon us will be by our meddling with any of the states beyond the Indus." And throughout the entire period of his subsequent residence in India he adhered to the opinion, and frequently expressed it in his correspondence with Lord Auckland, that the wisest course that the British Government could adopt would be the maintenance, as long as it could be maintained, with respect to external as well as internal states, of a system of non-interference Had he remained supreme in India, not a man would have been moved across the Indus.

* This was towards the end of 1835. I am anticipating the progress of the narrative, but having in this chapter illustrated Metcalfe's opinions on the Russo-Persian question, and as I may find no fitter opportunity for recurring to it, I may as well pursue the subject here.

† Mr. Robertson, afterwards Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West Provinces, was then temporarily filling a vacancy in Council occasioned by the absence of Mr. Ross at Agra, who had been temporarily appointed to the Lieutenant-Governorship pending the arrival of Lord Auckland.

When Sir Charles Metcalfe quitted India, the necessity for any sort of interference in the affairs of Afghanistan was less apparent than it afterwards became. But when, subsequently, the progress of events rendered it doubtful whether any rigid system of non-interference could be maintained, he concurred with Mr. Robertson in opinion that the course suggested by Mr. Henry Ellis would be the safest and not the least successful. But he had ceased to have any voice in the councils of the East, and could only deplore the invasion of Afghanistan. What, after that measure had been determined upon, he thought of its policy, and what were the consequences which he apprehended, may be gathered from the following, which in the spring of 1839 he addressed to Lord Glare, who had sent him copies of the first miserable collection of Central-Asian papers:

"I greatly lament," he wrote, "the proceedings to which they relate. It seems to me that we have needlessly and heedlessly plunged into difficulties and embarrassments, not without much aggression and injustice on our part, from which we can never extricate ourselves without a disgraceful retreat, which may be more fatal in its consequences than an obstinate perseverance in a wrong course. Our sole object is to resist the influence of Russia, and our measures are almost sure to establish it. If we go into a country to side with one of two parties, we necessarily throw the other into the arms of our rival. And there is no security that the party which we espouse may not immediately after fall under the same influence. For the influence of Russia in Afghanistan will rest mainly on the hope of being assisted against Runjeet Singh, and of recovering the territories conquered by him—an influence which the Afghans must to a man feel; while we, by guaranteeing those conquests to him, unavoidably place ourselves in opposition to the whole nation. We ought, I think, to have fought the diplomatic battle for influence without committing ourselves as we have done to measures that may possibly involve the ruin of our Indian empire; and if an alliance with the Afghans against the aggression of Persia was really necessary, there was, I conceive, a course open to us free from the

objections to which our present proceedings are liable—a course by which we need not have moved any force, nor increased any expense, or by which, if it had been necessary to advance, we should have gone into Afghanistan as friends, earnestly called for by the whole nation, whereas we now go as enemies to all the actual rulers, and can only succeed by their expulsion. We may succeed; and if we do, the first impression will be imposing on all our Indian enemies, and so far advantageous; but this benefit will be ephemeral. The only certain results, even in the event of brilliant success in the first instance, are permanent embarrassments and difficulties, political and financial, which it is most unsatisfactory to contemplate."

From the passages cited, Metcalfe's opinions on a few of the leading subjects which occupied the attention of Government whilst he sat at the Council Board, may be gathered. But it would be impossible, within the limited space at my disposal, to afford any just conception either of the multiplicity of questions to which he addressed himself, or the elaborate manner in which he discussed them. Nor were the discussions in which he was called upon to take part always unconnected with matters in which he had deep personal interest. Ever and anon the affairs of Hyderabad, the debts of the Nizam, and the transactions of the great money-lending house, were pressing forward obtrusively for re-consideration, and compelling Metcalfe to explain anew all the intricacies of this painful business.* Two new Governors-General had appeared on the stage since Lord Hastings had talked of putting these "teasing discussions" permanently to sleep; but still the names of Rumbold and Palmer were heard at the Council Board. At the same time, another Residency with which Metcalfe had long been connected was furnishing a great scandal, out of which arose some vexations and annoyances, which compelled him to stand upon his defence. His successor

* Sir William Rumbold had come out to Calcutta to wind up the affairs of the bankrupt house, and it was debated whether he should be permitted to proceed to Hyderabad.

at Delhi had been accused of corruption. The accused believed, or pretended to believe, that Metcalfe had instigated the proceedings against him; and, therefore, when defending himself, he endeavoured to cast aspersions upon the character of his predecessor. The prosecution was not instigated by Metcalfe. It was the work of a young civilian—an assistant at the Delhi Residency—who saw things which he could not with his high sense of probity and of duty to the State consent to see in silence and inactivity; and who had the noble courage to do what his refined integrity prompted.* But he said in after years, when he had greatly distinguished himself in another hemisphere, that in that, the most trying and the most painful passage of his life—in a position, indeed, of almost unexampled difficulty for a young public servant—nothing sustained him so much as the thought of the manliness with which Metcalfe had met *his* trials and difficulties at Hyderabad.

Nor were these the only sources of vexation which disturbed him at this time. At the commencement of the year 1830, the great Calcutta House of John Palmer and Co. stopped payment. At a meeting of creditors, held immediately upon the announcement of this event, Sir Charles Metcalfe took the chair. He had been appointed by the London House of Cockerill and Co., who were creditors to a very large amount, one of their attorneys, in conjunction with Mr. John Elliot, another member of the Company's Civil Service; and was immediately after Palmer's failure nominated, together with other members of both services and several mercantile gentlemen, European and native, assignees by the Insolvent Court. That in accepting the office, and thereby representing the interests of a large number of creditors in the ranks of both services, these public officers were committing any

* I do not know why I should not name Sir Charles Trevelyan.

impropriety, or infringing any rules or regulations laid down for their guidance, neither they nor their associates in India suspected. But the Court of Directors took another view of the matter. They believed that such an arrangement had too much of the commercial element in it, and that it was better that their servants should abstain from connecting themselves with assigneeships for the future. On the 6th of April, 1831, they despatched a public letter to Bengal, communicating their sentiments on these subjects; and Sir Charles Metcalfe, therefore, took the earliest opportunity of withdrawing his name from the list of assignees, and of recording an explanation of his conduct.

Such, briefly narrated, was Metcalfe's "time in Council." I come now to speak of his elevation to a higher post.

CHAPTER IV.

[1835—1836.]

THE GOVERNOR-GENERALSHIP.

Institution of the Government of Agra—The New India Bill—The Provisional Governor-Generalship—Correspondence with Mr. Tucker—The Ootacamund Council—Suspension of the Agra Government—Resignation of Lord William Bentinck—Succession to the Governor-Generalship—Contests at Home—Lord Heytesbury and Lord Auckland.

It may be remembered that when Charles Metcalfe held the office of Political Secretary, Sir John Malcolm urged him to plant his standard in Central India, assuring him that although he might go there as a commissioner, he would soon grow into a lieutenant-governor.* The temptation to become a "King" was eventually resisted; and Malcolm, who earnestly desired to leave his old field of employment in the hands of one whose great powers he knew how to estimate, was disappointed that his charmings met with no better success. Soon afterwards he returned to England. The idea of this Central-Indian Government still held possession of his mind. With all the earnestness and activity which were such conspicuous features of his character, he urged upon the home authorities the expediency of establishing a new administrative system for the provinces of Central India; and it would seem that both at the India House and at the Board of Control the validity of his arguments was recognised.

* *Ante*, Chapter XIII. Vol. I.

On the last day of the year 1826, Mr. Wynn, who then presided at the India Board, wrote to Sir John Malcolm, that he would be glad to visit him at Hyde Hall. The object of his visit was to press upon him the acceptance of the Government of Bombay. Among the most persuasive of the President's arguments was one to the effect that it would be of immense advantage to the public interests that the supervision of Central India should be entrusted to one so intimately acquainted with that part of the country. It was stated that the chairman of the Court of Directors was of the same opinion regarding the expediency of forming a new administration for Central India, and commissioning Malcolm to give it effect. The temptation was great; but it was not yielded to without a fortnight's consideration. Then Malcolm wrote, that "under the circumstances of its being in contemplation to form an administration for Central India, on a plan of more extensive native agency than has usually been employed in our Indian territories, and that it was desired to give him the supervision of such a plan," he would accept the Governorship of Bombay.

Called upon to state fully his opinions regarding this contemplated administration, Malcolm drew up an elaborate report, in which all the details of the proposed scheme were mapped out with the hand of a master. It was to be a lieutenant-governorship subordinate to the Governor-General in Council. But the Court of Directors were not at this time prepared to give their sanction to the great experiment. "A change so important required," they said, "the most attentive and serious consideration." Malcolm was thanked in becoming terms for his valuable report. He was told that his propositions were duly appreciated; but it was intimated to him that in the mean time he was "to consider himself as appointed exclusively to the office of Governor of Bombay."

So the great project for the establishment of a Government in Central India was folded up and shelved for a time. But as the period drew near for the re-consideration of the entire question of Indian Government, and it became necessary to frame a new act for the administration of our Eastern dominions, this matter, of a second local Government under the over-grown Presidency of Bengal, presented itself among the foremost points of discussion to all who were, either directly or indirectly, concerned in the work of legislation for India. The advantages of a presiding influence in Upper India were patent to all who considered the immense extent of the Bengal Presidency, and the difficulty of extending efficient control over all the details of administration in remote places, reaching to the banks of the Sutlej from a seat of Government planted in Calcutta. All the most experienced Indian statesmen were now of Malcolm's opinion, that it had become necessary to divide the duties, if not the responsibilities, of the Governor-General in Council. So in the new act of 1833, for the better government of our Indian possessions, it was decreed that a new Presidency in Northern India should be established, under the name of the Presidency of Agra. The first hasty idea of this great reform embraced the plan of a substantive Government, with a separate council of its own, similar to those of Madras and Bombay. But although the provision for a new presidency found its way into the Act of Parliament, it subsequently became a dead letter. The subject was imperfectly understood by the framers of the bill; whilst they who did understand it, were of opinion that a lieutenant-governorship, subordinate to the Governor-General in Council, was all that was required by the exigencies of the case. The arguments in favour of this modified arrangement subsequently prevailed. A supplementary act was passed, declaring, that as "much difficulty had arisen in carrying the original enactment into effect,

and as the same would be attended with a large increase of charge," the Court of Directors, under the direction of the Board of Control, were empowered to suspend the execution of the provisions of the act, "so far as related to the division of the said territories into two distinct presidencies." This was, in effect, the death-blow of the Agra Presidency. The home authorities determined to establish only a lieutenant-governorship in North-Western India.*

In the mean while, however, the Agra Government having been established by Act of Parliament, it was necessary to appoint a Governor. So, on the 20th of November, 1833, in a full Court, Sir Charles Metcalfe was unanimously appointed to the Government of Agra. The King's Ministers cordially concurred in the nomination. A month afterwards he was nominated Provisional Governor-General of India, on the death, resignation, or coming away of Lord William Bentinck.

To Mr. Tucker, who, as deputy-chairman of the Court of Directors, and one of Metcalfe's oldest friends—one of the first whose hospitality he had tasted in Calcutta as a boy of sixteen—had announced to him these honourable appointments, he wrote freely expressing the sentiments with which he regarded the honour which had been conferred upon him.† It was not the positive but the

* I have in this place given only a bare outline of the circumstances of the establishment of the Lieutenant-Governorship of the North-West Provinces. They will be found more fully detailed in a letter from Lord Auckland to Sir C. Metcalfe. The facts which I have stated above seem to have escaped the observation of Lord Auckland and Mr. Colvin.

† It was not until the 11th of June that Metcalfe received from the India House the official announcement of these appointments. Acknowledging on that day the receipt of this communication from Mr. Auber, then Secretary to the East India Company, he

provisional appointment which most stimulated his gratitude and pride. The following passages from his correspondence with the chairman of the Court of Directors* clearly indicate his feelings and opinions at this period:

"Accept my warmest thanks for the kind interest that you have taken in everything regarding my appointments, announced by the late overland despatch. Sensible as I am of the honour conferred by my nomination to the Government of Agra, I am much more gratified by the provisional appointment to succeed Lord William Bentinck temporarily, in the event of his going home before the arrival of his permanent successor. I should have felt that a removal from the Supreme Council to the Government of Agra, without that provisional arrangement, would have been something like a descent. As it is, I have

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wrote with respect to a suggestion in the letter of that functionary, relative to the necessity of economy:—

"The desire of the Court expressed in your letter, that economy may be most carefully consulted in the formation of the requisite establishments for the government of the new Presidency, shall be anxiously attended to. No one can be more sensible than I am of the necessity of strict economy. It is not a matter of option; for, viewing the present income, and the unavoidable demands upon it, it is not easy to imagine, unless some great and unexpected increase should take place in our resources, which none but a sanguine mind can anticipate, how the state machine is to work on, without some extensive reduction, even in the present scale of our expenditure, and it is difficult to devise how that reduction is to be effected. The increase of charge, therefore, which the formation of a new Presidency must to some extent create, is peculiarly unreasonable."

In this letter allusion is made to one of those frequently occurring instances of the carelessness with which acts of Parliament are framed. Metcalfe called attention to the circumstance that, in the event of the death or resignation of the Governor of Agra, it was declared that the senior member of the Agra Secretariat was to succeed him—but that whether the act meant the chief of the department, the officer who had been longest in it, or the senior member of the service, it was impossible to decide.

* Before the letters reached Metcalfe, Mr. Tucker had succeeded to the chair.

been highly honoured and distinguished, and wish that I could render service in proportion to the gratitude which I feel. My conscience tells me that I have always endeavoured to do my duty; but whatever my humble services have been, they have been richly and generously rewarded. Lord William tells me that he has sent in his resignation, and applied to be relieved in March. This he had done before he knew of my provisional appointment, regarding which he writes very handsomely and kindly, saying that it makes him easy about going, whenever his health may render that step necessary. He talks of returning to the Presidency in July; but the medical men think that he will incur great risk in the attempt, and I hope that he may be dissuaded from it until November, when it may be undertaken with safety. When he leaves us, his loss will, I think, be greatly regretted; and you will find it difficult to put a man equal to him in his place. His character will stand very high in India.

"With respect to a Council at Agra, as long as you have a Company's servant who may be presumed to have local experience, you will, I conceive, be better without a Council. When you appoint a stranger to the Government, you may require a Council for aid as well as check. At present it is desirable to avoid the expense, and to limit the charges of your new Government as much as possible."—[*May* 11, 1834.]

". . . I can never sufficiently thank you for the generous interest which you have taken in all that concerns me. I have indeed been highly honoured by the Court and the King's Ministers; and although my conscience tells me that I cannot devote myself more zealously than I have done to my public duties, if anything would have that effect it would be the magnificent treatment that I have received. The Government of Agra would have been a great honour; but had it come alone, I should have felt that, from the first seat in the Council, it would have been rather a fall than a rise. The provisional Governor-Generalship removed that feeling entirely, and places me, whether it have effect or not, in the proudest position which I can hope to reach. While on this subject, I will venture to remind you that, in the nomination of a successor to Lord William Bentinck, my provisional appointment will be null and void. Whether the Court will renew it or not will not probably depend on my wishes. I have no right to claim a continuance of the honour; but I should feel somewhat shorn of my beams if it were not renewed; for the second post in India is that of heir-presumptive to the first. I

hold that post now; but another will hold it if my provisional appointment be not renewed. I often, however, question my prudence in giving way to the ambition of holding these high offices. I have rather desponding views regarding our future administration in India. Unless our resources greatly increase—and where the increase is to come from I see not—we shall soon be embarrassed in our finances. We have an Indian surplus of eighty lakhs, more or less, to meet a home demand of three crores! Where is the difference to be found? We shall require the greatest economy; and this is a branch of Government in which scarcely any one is consistent. Your presence in India would have been beyond measure valuable on this account; but you occupy a higher post as the head of the Court, on which I congratulate you, and still more, the State.

"You know, I conclude, our present position. The Governor-General would endanger his life were he to quit the Neilgherry Hills before September, as he proposes, or as I should say, before October. He has therefore, from necessity, summoned the Council on the Hills. He has also suspended the formation of the Agra Government, and the application of the new Act to Bengal. I am to remain Vice-President here until his return. I fear that several things in this arrangement are illegal; but as it affects me personally, I prefer it to going at present to Agra; and his lordship's detention in the Hills is quite unavoidable. He nearly lost his life on his last attack, and every medical man predicted the most fatal consequences if he should attempt to encounter the heat of the plains at this season. He is now quite well where he is, but dare not move."—[*June* 26, 1834.]

The concluding passage of this extract explains itself. At the commencement of the year 1834, the health of Lord William Bentinck rendered it necessary that he should leave Bengal. He had been seized with sudden paroxysms of giddiness and other symptoms, which, although his medical attendants attributed them to the impaired state of his digestive organs, indicated at least the possibility of a morbid condition of the brain. Whatever the cause, the appearances were such that a conclave of the first medical men in Calcutta, with Simon Nicolson at their head, determined that a short voyage to sea, to be

followed by a residence in the more elevated parts of the Madras Presidency, was necessary for the restoration of the health of the Governor-General—perhaps for the preservation of his life. So on the 3rd of February he made over the charge of the local Government, and embarked for Madras. And Charles Metcalfe, as senior Member of Council, again became Vice-President in Council and Deputy-Governor of Bengal.*

Then arose a curious and anomalous condition of the Indian Government, which at the time excited much comment and some alarm. The necessity for Lord William Bentinck's departure from Bengal had occurred at a most inopportune moment. The old charter was then expiring. The new Act came into operation on the 30th of April, 1834. Under this Act the Supreme Government of India was re-modelled; but how, scattered as were the different components of the new Government, was this new constitution to be established—how, in fact, was the new Government to be inaugurated according to the provisions of the Act? Lord William Bentinck pitched his tent at Ootacamund, on the summit of the Neilgherry Hills. Carrying with him the powers of the Governor-General in Council, he might have exercised from that place all the functions of the Supreme Government; but the 30th of April, 1834, saw the death of the old Government, and then a great perplexity arose, which it was difficult to disentangle. Legally after that date there was no Supreme Government in India. The old Council was dead; and the new one had not been instituted. A Council, however, was improvised on the Hills. Colonel Morrison, of the Madras army, who had been appointed, under the new Act, a member of the Supreme Council, was sent for, and

* Major Sutherland was again appointed Private Secretary; Captain Higginson, Military Secretary; and Lieutenant J. H. Smyth, of the Artillery, Aide-de-camp.

took the oaths at Ootacamund. Mr. Macaulay, who had gone out as legislative member of Council, was diverted from Calcutta to join the Governor-General at the Sanatarium. It was then proposed to summon Mr. Ironside, a provisional member of the Bombay Council, who happened to be available, to make up the appointed number. He was duly sworn in, and took his seat in the Ootacamund Council; but Sir Frederick Adam soon afterwards joined the assembly on the Hills, and became a temporary member of the Supreme Government, so that the Council of India then consisted of the Governor-General, the Governor of Madras, an officer of the Madras artillery, and a brilliant essayist fresh from England.

Their first act was to issue a proclamation,* announcing the installation of the Supreme Government, and those of the minor presidencies, according to the provisions of the Charter, with the exception of the Government of Agra, the formation of which was suspended. But the Supreme Council having established itself at Ootacamund, what was to become of the Council at Calcutta? There was no provision for such an administrative body in the act of Parliament; but the Ootacamund Council, in the proclamation of which I have spoken, declared that, "whereas it is impracticable to carry into immediate execution all the preliminary measures, which will be necessary before the duties of the Government of Agra can be entered upon, or to adopt without previous inquiry and mature deliberation the different official and legislative proceedings which the separation of the two Governments require; and whereas, for the aforesaid reasons, it is not expedient that the Honourable Sir Charles Metcalfe should assume the Government of Agra before the return of the Governor-General and Council to Calcutta, the Governor-General in Council therefore has been pleased to resolve, and it

* Dated June 16, 1834.

is hereby notified accordingly, that the administration of the Presidency of Bengal as heretofore constituted shall in the meantime continue to be carried on by the Honourable the Vice-President in Council."

Of the illegality of these proceedings, a more particular account of which would belong rather to a memoir of Lord William Bentinck than to the life of Sir Charles Metcalfe, no doubt can be entertained. An Act of Indemnity was subsequently passed to legalize them. But during the uncertainty which such a state of things engendered, it is not strange that the activity of Government should have been in some measure paralysed. To Metcalfe himself the period was one of uncomfortable incertitude and suspense. He had been appointed to the Government of Agra, and he had accepted the appointment; but he did not know what it was to be. He did not know what were to be the powers entrusted to him—whether he was to be a governor indeed, or merely a better kind of commissioner. The question was under the consideration of the strangely-constituted Council at Ootacamund. The result of their deliberations was a despatch to the Court of Directors, recommending such a curtailment of the power and authority of the new Government, that only the consideration of the provisional Governor-Generalship restrained Metcalfe from seeking permission to decline an offer of such questionable value.

A copy of the Ootacamund letter was sent to Calcutta, with an invitation to Metcalfe and his colleague to offer any observations and suggestions that might occur to them. In compliance with this invitation, Metcalfe and Blunt addressed a long and very clearly-reasoned letter to the Governor-General in Council,* in which they very

* This letter was printed, or rather mis-printed, by order of the House of Commons. The copy before me, with Metcalfe's autograph corrections, exhibits with peculiar force the very careless

pertinently asked, "What is the new Government for?" It was to be divested of all military and all political power. "To call a machine," they said, "so destitute of governing powers a Government, appears to us a misnomer." It would be better, they contended, to abandon the scheme altogether than so to degrade the name of "Government." If it be necessary, they said, to relieve the Governor-General of the supervision of the details of revenue and judicial administration in the North-Western Provinces, it would surely be better, they said, for that purpose to appoint an officer of the civil service, with any other designation than that of Governor, to perform such limited duties.

Having recommended this modified arrangement to the consideration of the Governor-General and the Court of Directors, Metcalfe, before the letter was closed, proceeded thus to speak of himself:

"Sir Charles Metcalfe, on his own part, begs leave to entreat, that if the abolition of the Government of Agra be contemplated by the Honourable Court, there may not be any hesitation or scruple on his account in the instantaneous adoption of that measure. It would be presumptuous to suppose that there could be, but he nevertheless thinks it right to state that he does not consider himself as possessing any claim that ought for a moment to retard an arrangement which in the case supposed would be so desirable, and to declare explicitly that he shall not consider himself as injured by the abolition of his office, nor in the slightest degree entitled to compensation or consideration of any kind. He feels that he has already been rewarded beyond his deserts. He has been induced [to remain in India]* during late years, not by any wish to increase his pecuniary means, nor any expectation of

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manner in which important state-papers are often given to the public. The errors are of that unhappy kind—as "with" for "without," "cannot" for "can"—which entirely changes, perhaps to the very opposite significance, the whole meaning of the text.

* The words in brackets are omitted in the printed copy—an omission which renders the whole sentence entirely meaningless.

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personal advantage, but by attachment to the service in which his life has been passed from the earliest age; pride in the approbation bestowed on his humble exertions; and a desire to perform the duties entrusted to him so as to promote the welfare of his country, and the happiness of the people subject to its dominion. He will be as willing to retire, when his removal may be deemed beneficial to the State, as he has been to embrace the opportunities graciously granted to him of continuing to devote himself to the public service."

This letter was written on the 4th of September, 1834. Three weeks afterwards Metcalfe wrote more freely and circumstantially respecting his feelings and intentions to Mr. Tucker, who was then Chairman of the Company:

". . . . I congratulate you heartily on your signal triumph in the last Mandamus affair, which was in great measure owing to your own firmness. I am sorry that Mr. Grant was on the wrong side; for besides the respect which I entertain for his public character, I have reason to be particularly thankful to him for the generous part which he took in my behalf, regarding both the Madras and the Agra Government. With reference to the latter, you will perceive that the Governor-General purposes to station it at Allahabad, and to turn it into a sort of judicial and revenue commissionership, which is to have no concern whatever in political, military, or financial affairs; and that, in consequence, I have recommended its total abolition. If an efficient government is not required in the North-West quarter, or if it cannot be formed, owing to the difficulty of separating power and patronage from the Supreme Government, why have any? Such a thing as it is proposed to set up at Allahabad, will be an useless expense. If that is to remain, I would much prefer that it should be altogether abolished, and something more economical substituted. I do not care what becomes of me. I am ready and willing to retire and return home; but shall not think of such a step as long as I hold the provisional appointment of Governor-General during a vacancy. On the same principle on which I have remained to take the Government of Agra, I should be willing, in the event of its abolition, to take either of the other two subordinate governments; but were I to make an appointment for myself, it would in preference be that of Vice-President, or First Member of the Supreme Council, with the privilege of residing in the absence of

the Governor-General, and that of succeeding to his office during every interregnum. To this might be added, or not, the Deputy-Governorship of the re-united Presidency of Bengal, including Agra, in which capacity I could aid the Governor-General in internal administration. Although I mention these things, in order to show that I have no desire to quit the public service, I beg you distinctly to understand that I neither ask nor seek any of them. If you abolish the Government *ci-devant* of Agra, which I sincerely hope may be the case if it is to be the wretched insignificant machine proposed at Allahabad, I shall neither expect nor want any compensation, but shall make my bow, grateful for all the favour and kindness that I have hitherto received. The preceding remarks have reference to the supposition of your abolishing the office to which I stand appointed, a measure which I strongly recommend. I will next say what I am likely to do in the event of your confirming the Governor-General's arrangement. I shall not think of resigning my Governorship as long as I hold the provisional appointment of Governor-General. That is an honour which would make almost any situation palatable to me. But if, on the nomination of Lord William Bentinck's successor, I find that my provisional appointment has not been renewed, I am not so certain that I shall remain. At present I feel much disgusted at the proposed arrangement at Allahabad; and had I now to decide, without the inducement to remain which the provisional Governor-Generalship affords, I should probably prefer going home to the assumption of a Government of so little promise. But after trial, I may have become interested in its duties, and may think differently. A third supposition is, that you may restore the Government of Agra to what, I conclude, it was intended to be by those who made it—which I should define as an efficient Government in the North-West quarter, with its capital at Agra, subordinate, with the other Governments, to the Supreme Government, but having locally the full powers of a government in all branches of administration. In that case, I shall be as glad to remain in the Government as I was to accept it, still hoping that the provisional appointment to be temporary Governor-General during an interregnum may be continued.

"All this regarding myself has been elicited by the friendly interest which you have taken in my affairs, but without any wish that you should give yourself any trouble on my account. Perhaps the happiest thing for me would be to be forced home, where I ought to be thinking of going, if I am to go at all.

Your objections to the use of your official influence to obtain office for your family, do you great honour, and I trust that they will be duly appreciated."—[*September* 25, 1834.]

On the 14th of November Lord William Bentinck returned to Calcutta; and on the same day a Government notification was issued, declaring that Sir Charles Metcalfe had "taken the prescribed oaths, and assumed charge of the Government of Agra."* "The seat of Government," it was added, "will be for the present at Allahabad, and will comprise all those territories which have hitherto been under the control of the Courts of Sudder Dewanny and Nizamut Adawlut for the Western Provinces in their judicial and revenue capacity." A salute was fired from the ramparts of Fort William; and it was ordered that the "commission of Sir Charles Metcalfe be promulgated with the usual ceremonies at Allahabad, and at the principal military stations of the Agra Presidency."

So Charles Metcalfe prepared to make his way to Allahabad. It was decreed that he should go—but it was hard to say what was the object of his going. Lord William Bentinck had returned to Calcutta in improved health. The fine air of the Neilgherry Hills had acted with wonderful effect on his impaired constitution. But still such warnings as he had received were not to be disregarded, and he had wisely determined not to bear the assaults of another Indian summer. He had, therefore, tendered his resignation of the Supreme Government of India, and announced his intention of embarking for Europe in the middle of the following March. As Metcalfe

* Sir Charles Metcalfe's time in Council expired on the 24th of August; and it is not to be doubted that after that date he was not legally a member of the Government. The Ootacamund Council had no power to suspend the provisions of an Act of Parliament; but as I have said, an Act of Indemnity subsequently legalized the measure, and all that had been done in consequence of it.

had been provisionally appointed to succeed him, and there was little likelihood of a new Governor-General arriving in India before the departure of the old; it seemed that the Governor of Agra was about to set out for the Western Provinces only to look at the seat of his Government, and return with hot haste to Calcutta.

The leading fact, however, which in this November, 1834, was patent to the world at large, was that Sir Charles Metcalfe was going. He had dwelt among the people of Calcutta now for more than seven years, and it is hard to say how he had endeared himself to them. The community of the Indian capital is made up of three distinct classes—of Europeans, of natives, and people who are neither or both—the mixed races known as Eurasians, or East-Indians.—These three great classes now vied with each other in doing honour to the departing statesman. On the 28th of November a public entertainment was given to Sir Charles Metcalfe at the Town-hall of Calcutta. More than 250 gentlemen sat down to dinner, under the auspices of one of the Judges of the Supreme Court.* The Governor-General most reluctantly, and only under strong pressure from without, excused himself at the eleventh hour for his non-attendance, on the plea of ill-health.† But his spirit was with the assembled party. And among all the just tributes paid to Metcalfe at this congratulatory entertainment, there was not one more cordially uttered, or more gratefully received, than that which came from Lord

* Sir J. P. Grant.

† The exhortations of Lord William's medical attendant would not have sufficed to keep him at home on such an occasion, if Lady William had not implored him to resist the temptation, urging that on a somewhat similar occasion in Scotland, Lord Dalhousie, who had suffered under a complaint of the same character as the Governor-General's, had been carried out from dinner in a fit. Lady William took all the responsibility upon herself, and wrote to Metcalfe a characteristic letter, explaining what she had done.*

William Bentinck, and was read aloud to the delighted assembly :—

"It happens," wrote Lord William, "unfortunately for those who honestly administer the affairs of this country, that neither their motives nor their acts come officially before the public eye; but the present case may be deemed, in some degree, an exception to the general rule, because during the long period that Sir Charles Metcalfe has filled, in succession, the first appointment under the local Government, one general conviction prevails as to the purity, honour, and success of his conduct, as well as of his just title to the highest distinctions which have been lately conferred upon him by the home authorities. I had hoped, upon the present occasion, to have in person expressed my concurrence in this general conviction. My connection with Sir Charles Metcalfe in Council, during more than six years, ought to make me the best of witnesses, unless, indeed, friendship should have blinded me, and conquered my detestation of flattery, which, I trust, is not the case. I therefore unhesitatingly declare, that whether in private or public life, I never met with the individual whose integrity, liberality of sentiment, and delicacy of mind, excited in a greater degree my respect and admiration. The State never had a more able and upright councillor, nor any Governor-General a more valuable and independent assistant and friend; and if, during the same period, any merit can be claimed for the principles by which the Indian Government has been guided, to Sir Charles must the full share be assigned. Neither has the access which my situation has given me to the public records and to past transactions led me to form a less favourable opinion of his preceding career. I need not enter into particulars. Suffice it to express my sincere impression, that among all the statesmen who, since my first connection with India, have best served their country, and have most exalted its reputation and interests in the East, Webb, Close, Sir Arthur Wellesley, Elphinstone, Munro, and Malcolm, equal rank and equal honour ought to be given to Sir Charles Metcalfe."

By the members of the Bengal Club another banquet was given to him. At this dinner presided Brigadier Clements Brown, the Commandant of Artillery, an old and distinguished officer, who had served under Lord Lake; he held in lively and in pleasant remembrance the raids after Holkar and Ameer Khan, in which Metcalfe had taken

part thirty years before; and now alluded to those ancient days with a fine relish, performing all his presidential duties with that hearty geniality and full enjoyment of the present, which were sure never to be absent from him on such occasions as these.

But public dinners, however numerously attended, are but imperfect demonstrations of respect and attachment on the part of such a society as that of Calcutta. The assemblage represents but one sex; and Metcalfe had never forgotten that there were two. His periodical balls had been the best ever given in Calcutta; and they had done much, at a time of peculiar depression,* to keep alive the social energies of those who require such mild stimulants. With the gentler portion of the large circle of his acquaintance Metcalfe had ever been extremely popular. He was so gentle himself; so kindly, so considerate towards women. His politeness was that true politeness of the heart—the courtesy of a chivalrous nature. The ladies of Calcutta were eager, therefore, to unite in a demonstration of attachment to their departing friend, and to meet him once again at an entertainment given in his honour. A fancy ball was determined upon and voted with acclamation. On the 4th of December the project was carried into effect. There was a magnificent gathering at the Town-hall; and all the more gaiety of heart for the solacing reflection that the entertainers and the entertained, in spite of the valedictory character of the fête, would soon, in all probability, again be face to face with each other.†

* The failure of all the great mercantile houses in Calcutta had, at this time, reduced many to comparative poverty, (Metcalfe himself had been largely a sufferer), and thrown a general gloom over society.

† The newspaper annalists of the day present us with elaborate pictures of the animated scene. The following passage in one of their reports exhibits the fanciful character of the entertainment:—"The staircase and ball-room were profusely decorated with

Such were the festive demonstrations in which Metcalfe's numerous friends, who had partaken of his unfailing hospitality, were fain to indulge. But the respect and attachment of the larger outside circle, who knew him only by his deeds, who admired his character, and had profited as a body by his beneficence, took another and more enduring shape. Three public addresses were presented to him; one by the European community of Calcutta; another by the East-Indians;* and a third by the natives of the city and

garlands, and festoons, and other devices, in very excellent taste. The *dias*, at the upper end of the room, exhibited the arms of Sir Charles, set off with crimson and white muslin drapery. At the opposite end, a starred crimson curtain for a time concealed the place used as a stage; but, shortly after the Governor of Agra entered the room, the curtain was drawn, and opened to view a very pretty scene representing the *Taj*, as seen across the river, with a mural crown and the charter, and the usual paraphernalia of authority, thrown together in the foreground. After a while, the curtain fell, and the dancing was resumed; but before supper, another signal called attention to the rising curtain, which again displayed the same view of Agra, with the addition of a fleet of boats arriving; and presently appeared a steamboat, with its funnel smoking away (real smoke), and a salute from the ramparts, contrived with gunpowder made for the purpose without sulphur, announced the landing of the new governor. At the same time, tiny rockets were ascending their twenty feet into the air, and little flower-pot fireworks were adding to the illumination on either side, and in the garden of the Taj a diminutive fountain was playing. The dresses of the ladies did ample honour to the occasion. The suggestion of the stewards that the colours of Sir Charles Metcalfe should be worn, was adopted by all."

* Metcalfe had ever looked with tender compassion upon the East Indian community. As a member of the Government, he had advocated their rights (see *ante*, page 65), and had been eager to see them no longer regarded as a distinct class. They were very sensible of this, and in their address to him said: "The advocacy on your part of a liberal policy, in reference to our interests, is viewed by us as an act for which we can make no adequate return. To every undertaking that has had in view the well being of the East Indian class, you have not failed to afford

the suburbs. Perhaps the last was the most gratifying of all. It was signed by more than five hundred of the most intelligent and influential native gentlemen resident at the capital :—

"Our opportunities," they said, "of estimating the private qualities that have earned you the love of your countrymen have necessarily been few. But it would be a reproach to our hearts and understandings, if we did not come forward to proclaim our sense of the inflexible regard for equal justice, and utter contempt for abuse, corruption, and chicanery, which have uniformly marked your official career. On this we dwell as the leading feature of your public life; for our great Teacher tells us, that in a ruler the love of justice is the first of virtues. But it is not this alone that calls for our parting testimony. Your ear has always been accessible to our petitions and representations—your hand has ever been open to the distresses of our countrymen—our institutions, both of charity and education, have ever found in your bounty a ready resource. Without flattering our vanity or indulging our caprice, you have ever studied, both in your public and your private conduct, to avoid offence to our habits and prejudices. Though all these considerations make us look upon your departure as the loss, to this part of India, of the firmest friend to the native interests, yet it is a consolation to know that you will not be entirely lost to Hindostan; and that your exertions for the public good are only transferred to another quarter, where they are at least as well known and as highly valued."

To this Sir Charles Metcalfe replied :—

"GENTLEMEN,—I receive with the highest gratification the honour conferred on me by this address. I cannot be insensible to the value of this pleasing token of esteem and approbation from so numerous and respectable a body of the native community of Calcutta and its neighbourhood, among whom I recognise many of those most eminent in rank and character. The senti-

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your warmest encouragement and support: our schools and societies have been cherished by your munificence; and we have looked to you as a never-failing resource in every emergency. These, sir, are the claims which you have upon our regard and affection. These are the circumstances which lead us to consider you our friend and benefactor."

ments which you express are exceedingly kind and obliging, and will be a source of cheering recollection in the distant scene to which I am proceeding.

"I greatly lament that a difference in religion and customs should operate, as it does, in a great degree, to prevent the benefits of social intercourse between the native and European communities in India; and consequently to preclude that personal intimacy, and that knowledge of private character which are the chief cements of mutual attachment. You can neither share in our convivial enjoyments, nor take an interest in our amusements; and it is much to be regretted that nothing has yet been devised, which, being suited to the habits and tastes of both parties, might lead naturally to that frequency of intercourse which is so much to be desired, as tending to unite all in the bonds of affection. I trust that time will effect this desirable result, and remove the obstacles which retard it. Notwithstanding this deficiency of personal intimacy, you have with marked liberality, presented me with this testimony of your esteem on public grounds, such as cannot fail to make it highly gratifying. I hope that you may never see reason to alter the favourable opinions which you express. The first wish of my heart is that I may be instrumental, in the office to which I have been appointed, towards the welfare of the native community of India. Such is my own anxious desire—such is my positive duty—such is the object of the incessant injunctions of the Supreme Government of India, and of the authorities in England who have charged me with my present important trust;—and that the happiness of India may be the fruit of British rule, is the ardent prayer of every British heart."

Nor were these all the demonstrations of respect and gratitude which solaced him at this time. One more instance of the regard in which he was held by all classes may be cited here, as it differs from all the rest. On the eve of his departure, an address came to him from the Baptist missionaries of Calcutta.* "Precluded by views of duty as ministers from uniting in the festive testimonies of esteem for his acknowledged virtues," they were still

* The address is signed by Dr. Yates, Messrs. Thomas, W. H. Pearce, Ellis, G. Pearce, and Penney.

anxious to approach him, in grateful acknowledgment of the countenance and support which he had, "for so long a time, promptly and liberally afforded to them in their efforts to diffuse among the natives of India the benefits of moral and religious instruction."—

"Whilst thus occupied," continued these excellent men, "we have often appealed to you, and solicited pecuniary aid, and the powerful influence of your name and character, on behalf of the objects we have sought to accomplish; and with heartfelt gratitude we own that we never appealed in vain, but have always met with a kind and generous reception. In preaching the Gospel to the heathen; the instruction of the young, whether male or female, in boarding and day-schools; and in attempts to relieve the wants of native Christians, by encouraging among them habits of enterprise and industry; as well as in various other ways, we have been greatly assisted by your generous contributions, for all of which we beg to present our sincere and grateful acknowledgments."*

Metcalfe's reply should be held in perpetual remembrance:—

"No one," he said, "can entertain a higher opinion than I do of the important labours and exemplary devotion of Christian missionaries in India. They seem destined by Almighty Providence to be the chief instruments for improving and enlightening the inhabitants of this country through the means of education and moral instruction. I abstain from the expression of any opinion with regard to religious instruction, because, whilst it is the undoubted duty of Christian missionaries to seek the conversion of the heathen, and whilst every Christian must rejoice at any success that may attend their endeavours, it is nevertheless, I conceive, the duty of a Government for Hindoos and Mahomedans

* At the close of the letter, the reverend gentlemen bespoke Sir C. Metcalfe's favourable notice of two fellow-missionaries, who were about to proceed to Allahabad. "Their object," it was said, "will be, by preaching the Gospel, instructing the young, and other legitimate means, to benefit the native population. And it is particularly delightful to us to know that in these labours they will live under the protection of a Governor who has already given proof that all such measures as are calculated to enlighten the mind, elevate the character, improve the heart, and save the souls of men, will meet with his countenance and support."

as well as for Christians, to protect the natives in the undisturbed enjoyment of their own religion, and to exercise no influence whatever for their conversion, leaving that work to the unaided and quiet reasoning of the ministers of the Holy Gospel. I am happy in the belief that the religious proceedings of the missionaries are conducted with a discretion which must relieve their labours from any alarming or offensive character, and at the same time promote their efficiency."*

Whilst all these honours were crowding thickly upon Charles Metcalfe from the neighbourhood in which he had dwelt for so many years, there came a voice of congratulation from a distance which stirred his heart perhaps more than all. A letter from his old master, Lord Wellesley,† came to him, with a cordial assurance that "no one was more happy than himself at the wise selection the Government had made in placing him at the head of the new Presidency." The sight of that well-known handwriting, which had lost none of its old characteristic boldness, awakened many moving recollections, and many feelings of pristine gratitude. A copy of the answer which he returned I have found preserved among his papers :—

SIR CHARLES METCALFE TO MARQUIS WELLESLEY.

"My Lord,—Few things in life have given me greater pleasure than the receipt of your lordship's kind letter delivered by Lieutenant Campbell. It is now within a few days of thirty-four years since I had first the honour of being presented to you. You were then the Governor-General of India, and I was a boy of fifteen, entering on my career. I shall never forget the kindness with which you treated me from first to last during your stay in India, nor the honour and happiness which I enjoyed in being for a considerable period a member of your family. So much depends on the first turn given to a man's course, that I may fairly attribute all that has since happened to me of good to the countenance

* This reply was despatched from camp on the 17th of December, after Metcalfe had commenced his journey to Allahabad.

† Then Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland. The letter is dated "Dublin Castle, 1834."

and favour with which you distinguished me at that early period. My public principles were learned in your school—the school of honour, zeal, and public spirit—and to my adherence to those principles I venture to ascribe all the success that has attended me.

As I was proceeding to join the new Presidency, after being relieved from the Vice-Presidentship at Fort William, by the return of the Governor-General from Madras, about the time of Lieutenant Campbell's arrival from England, I asked him to accompany me, his regiment being also in that quarter. We are now together on our march. I shall anxiously look out for an opportunity of advancing him. It may be more distant and more difficult than I wish, owing to the retention by the Supreme Government of all patronage connected with the army; but before we part I will ascertain his views, and do my best for him as soon as I can. Believe me, my lord, with reverence, gratitude, and attachment, fervently and affectionately your most faithful servant,

"C. T. METCALFE."

It was with pleasure not less sincere than the feelings with which it was written, that Lord Wellesley received this letter. He spoke of it long afterwards in terms of the warmest satisfaction. It was not one of the many tributes to his high qualities of which he was least proud.*

When Charles Metcalfe quitted Calcutta, setting his face towards the seat of his new Government, he carried with him many pleasant thoughts—thoughts of the past, thoughts of the future. It is hard to say whether the demonstrations of attachment which attended him on his

* Writing in September, 1835, to Sir Charles Metcalfe, with reference to the collection of Wellesley despatches, then in course of publication, Mr. Edmonstone said: "This narrative, I know, will interest you, for you have shown that it must by a letter of yours to his lordship, written in the year 1834, expressive of feelings with regard to him, and sentiments regarding the character of his government, which are not less honourable to you than they are gratifying to him. You may judge of the estimation in which he holds it, by his having directed its insertion in the third volume, which is now in preparation. He does, indeed, speak of it in the highest terms of satisfaction."—[*MS. Correspondence.*]

departure, or the almost certainty that he was about soon to return to the Presidency to occupy a higher official position than he had ever held before, were more solacing to one in whom the affections were as vigorous as ever, and ambition not dulled by success. A few words will sufficiently describe his assumption of the Government of Agra.* He went to Allahabad—he pitched his tents in the fort—he held a levee—and he returned to Calcutta. He had scarcely reached the seat of his Government, when

* One passage, however, from Metcalfe's correspondence at this time must be given, for it indicates the earnestness with which he was about to address himself to the business of administration in the North-West Provinces, and of the high sense which he entertained of the responsibility of his office:—"I am now," he wrote to Mr. Tucker, "on my march to Allahabad. The Governor-General is to embark on the 15th of March. If his successor do not arrive before, I shall return to Calcutta by that time, in order to take my temporary appointment. I am almost sorry for it, as its being permanent is out of the question; not sorry that I have the honour, but that the successor, if he be to come soon, do not come at once, for I am becoming interested in my Agra Government, and hope to do some good. When Lord William told you that I did not like my removal to Agra, he must have alluded to my opinion, that a seat in the Supreme Government was in some respects superior to any subordinate Government. In every other point of view, I was highly pleased with my appointment to Agra, and regarded it as a great honour. I am now getting deeply interested in its duties; and if I retain my provisional appointment of Governor-General, on the coming out of Lord W.'s successor, I shall be quite happy and contented. I still, however, think that the Government ought to be made more of, or abolished. The expense is not necessary for the duties assigned to the office. . . . Be assured that I am sensible of my responsibility, and that the most anxious wish of my heart is to render the country under me prosperous and happy. I do not stay in India to make or add to a fortune, but solely in order to perform, to the best of my ability, the high duties entrusted to me. I seek no reward beyond the approbation of my own conscience; but, without seeking, I have been generously and magnificently rewarded by those above me—rewarded beyond my deserts."—[*Camp, February* 2, 1835.]

advices of the speedy departure of the Governor-General, and the certainty that no successor would be immediately appointed, compelled his return to the Presidency. He arrived just in time to take an affectionate leave of Lord and Lady William Bentinck; and on the 20th of March, 1834, he became, what more than thirty years before he declared that he would become—Governor-General of India.

He succeeded to the chief seat in the Government of India in virtue of his provisional appointment to succeed on the death or resignation of Lord William Bentinck. But whether he would be suffered to continue in charge of the Government, or be displaced to make room for some new man sent out for the convenience of the British Ministry, were questions which yet remained to be solved. Every fresh arrival from England brought some new intelligence, or some strange report. The common question in men's mouths was, "Who is to be Governor-General?" Lord Melbourne was then at the head of the Administration. Mr. Grant was at the Board of Control. First it was reported that the latter statesman was himself coming out to Calcutta; then Lord Palmerston was named; and then it seemed almost certain that the choice would fall upon Lord Munster. Again the gossip both of public prints and private letters took another turn, and Lord Auckland became the favourite candidate. And every now and then it was confidently stated that Metcalfe himself would be the man. Never, before or since, has the Indian community been held so long in suspense.

Mr. Tucker was then Chairman of the East India Company. With Metcalfe he maintained a close and familiar correspondence. But those were days when regular communication between the two countries was unknown, and even the joint powers of the Chairman of the Company and the Governor-General could not render the

transit of their letters otherwise than tardy and uncertain. All, however, that could be done to keep Metcalfe informed upon points of such deep interest and importance to him, was done by the friendly Chairman. On the 28th of August the latter wrote: "We have received Lord William Bentinck's resignation. . . . . It is my intention to place in nomination either Mr. Elphinstone or yourself—whoever of the two may be most acceptable to the Court and the Ministry." On the 4th of September he wrote again, saying: "I intend on Wednesday next to propose to the Court that you should be continued in the charge of the Supreme Government, and I have written to Mr. Grant to notify this intention. With the Court I should have no difficulty, for I already know the sentiments of the majority; but I cannot say what may be the views of the King's Ministers. . . . . *I* am determined on my course; and I will resign the chair rather than propose a party whom I cannot recommend on fair public grounds."

These letters reached Metcalfe in February, as he was journeying towards Allahabad. "My dear friend," he wrote to Mr. Tucker—"my friend, indeed! The result of what was going on cannot be my nomination to the Governor-Generalship; but I regard it as a high honour that you should have thought of me for that post; and my feelings are the same as if your wish had been successful. Elphinstone is the man in whom all voices would have been most concurrent. His administration would have been splendid and most popular." In another letter, written on his return to the Presidency, he repeated the expression of his gratitude. "I can never sufficiently thank you," he wrote to Mr. Tucker; "and am truly sorry to find that whilst you were generously engaged in a struggle in which I was so much interested, you were embarrassed by want of intelligence as to my views. I am fully prepared for the result; and as I never expected to be Governor-General,

I shall not be disappointed in not being so. My gratitude to those who have fought such a battle for me, and chiefly to yourself, ought to be unbounded; and will, I trust, be as lasting as life."*

By this time Metcalfe had received information of what the Court had actually done in his behalf. Mr. Tucker had written to Mountstuart Elphinstone proposing to put him in nomination as successor to Lord William Bentinck.† But the honour had been declined on the plea of failing health; and on the 28th of September a series of resolutions had been proposed to the Court, and carried by an overwhelming majority, declaratory of their opinion that, "adverting to the public character and services of Sir Charles Metcalfe," it was inexpedient to make "any other arrangement for suplying the office of Governor-General."‡

* *MS. Correspondence—March* 5, 1835;—On the river, below Monghyr.

† Mr. Tucker had proposed to the Court the names of Elphinstone and Metcalfe conjointly; and the Court had, in the first instance, selected the former, thinking, as with characteristic modesty he wrote to Metcalfe, "probably from my being on the spot and unemployed that I would be most likely to escape objection."

‡ The following are the resolutions which were carried by a majority of fifteen to two:—

"That this Court deeply lament that the state of Lord William Bentinck's health should be such as to deprive the Company of his most valuable services; and this Court deem it proper to record, on the occasion of his lordship's resignation of the office of Governor-General, their high sense of the distinguished ability, energy, zeal, and integrity with which his lordship has discharged the arduous duties of his exalted station.

"That, referring to the appointment which has been conferred by the Court, with the approbation of his Majesty, on Sir Charles T. Metcalfe, provisionally, to act as Governor-General of India, upon the death, resignation, or coming away of Lord William Bentinck; and adverting also to the public character and services of Sir Charles Metcalfe, whose knowledge, experience, and talents

But the Crown Ministers were not inclined to ratify the choice of the Court of Directors. They raked up an old dictum of Mr. Canning, to the effect that it was more expedient to appoint an English statesman, than one trained in either of the Indian services, to the office of Governor-General;* and it was decreed, therefore, that Metcalfe had too much knowledge and experience—in a word, was too well qualified for the performance of the duties of such an office to be suffered to undertake them.

Against this peremptory setting aside of the claims of the entire body of their servants, the Court of Directors, as represented by Mr. Tucker and Mr. Stanley Clarke, had

eminently qualify him to prosecute successfully the various important measures consequent on the new Charter-Act, this Court are of opinion that it would be inexpedient at present to make any other arrangement for supplying the office of Governor-General. And it is resolved accordingly, that the Chairs be authorised and instructed to communicate this opinion to his Majesty's Ministers, through the President of the Board of Commissioners for the Affairs of India."

* The words of Mr. Grant's letter of October 1, 1834, are worth quoting:—

"With respect to the appointment to that office of any servant of the Company, however eminent his knowledge, talents, and experience may confessedly be, his Majesty's Ministers agree in the sentiments of Mr. Canning, expressed in a letter from him to the Court on the 25th of December, 1820, that the case can hardly be conceived in which it would be expedient that the *highest* office of the Government in India should be filled otherwise than from England, and that at one main link at least between the systems of the Indian and British Governments ought, for the advantage of both, to be invariably maintained.

"On this principle it has usually been thought proper to act; and in the various important measures consequent on the new Charter-Act, his Majesty's Ministers see much to enjoin the continuance of the general practice, but nothing to recommend a deviation from it."

vigorously remonstrated.* But their remonstrances had been without effect. The Whig Ministry were still bent on appointing one of their own party to the magnificent office of Viceroy of the East; and the Company appeared to be equally determined to reject all the Whig nominees. In the meanwhile nothing was done. New rumours came floating out to India; new names were added to the already inflated list of candidates for the occupancy of Government House.† Whilst speculation was still at its height regarding the issue of the contest that was going on at home between the Court and the Board, Calcutta was excited by the intelligence that the Whig Ministers had resigned, and that a new Government had been formed, with Sir Robert Peel at its head. And soon afterwards the *Hugh Lindsay* steamer brought to Bombay, and thence despatched to the seat of the Supreme Government, the important tidings of the appointment of Lord Heytesbury to the Governor-Generalship of India.‡

The intelligence was not received with much enthusiasm in Calcutta. Some hope had been entertained that, although the Whigs had declared their determination not to appoint any Company's servant to the chief seat in the Government, the same spirit of exclusiveness would not actuate their successors. And, indeed, the professions

* *Letter of Chairman and Deputy-Chairman of the Court of Directors, October* 8, 1834.

† At one time Lord Durham, at another Lord Mulgrave; and then an influential member of the Court of Directors wrote to Sir Charles Metcalfe, that "the prevailing rumour is that Sir C. Manners Sutton, the Speaker, will be the individual whom Government will desire to see appointed;" whilst another wrote out that Lord Minto would command the greatest number of suffrages.

‡ Alexander Burnes, who had come out by the overland route in charge of despatches, sent the information to Sir Charles Metcalfe, in a letter written "On board the *Hugh Lindsay*, April 30, 1835."

of the Tories differed from those of their opponents, inasmuch as that they made a show of repudiating all exclusiveness by offering the Governor-Generalship to Mr. Elphinstone, who had declined it a few months before. Why the appointment was not then offered to Sir Charles Metcalfe it is hard to say. It was suggested to him, that perhaps the Tories regarded him as "too much of a Destructive." At all events, not only did Lord Ellenborough, who presided at the India Board, not countenance his permanent appointment, but for some time he pretended to doubt the expediency of nominating him provisionally to the office, in the event of Lord Heytesbury's death or resignation. The continued residence of Sir Charles Metcalfe in India depended upon his nomination; but Lord Ellenborough at one time proposed to send out Sir Henry Fane, the newly appointed Commander-in-Chief, with a commission as Provisional Governor-General of India.

Sir Henry Fane was a fine old soldier and a staunch Tory; but this preposterous idea was speedily abandoned. In strong terms Mr. Tucker urged the claims and merits of Sir Charles Metcalfe. Lord Ellenborough took counsel with his colleagues—the Duke of Wellington and Sir Robert Peel; and on the 2nd of March, 1835, the Chairman wrote to Metcalfe, saying, "I have the satisfaction to inform you that you were unanimously appointed on Friday last to take charge of the office of Governor-General in the event of the death, resignation, &c., of Lord Heytesbury; and this additional mark of confidence cannot fail, I trust, to gratify you."* To Metcalfe, indeed, well

* This letter must have been sent by the overland route, among Burnes' despatches; for the receipt of it was acknowledged on the 24th of May. I cannot help expressing my conviction that, of all men in the world, none will have more reason to be grateful to the great agency of steam than future generations of Indian

knowing as he did what were the chances of an Indian statesman without political influence, who had not been in England since he was a schoolboy, against those of any Whig or Tory nobleman, who had either to be provided for, or got rid of by the Ministry of the day, the refusal of the Crown Ministers to appoint him permanently to the office of Governor-General of India was a source of much less disappointment than it was to his friends and to the community at large. He had aspired only to the provisional appointment, and with this he was now satisfied. To his old friend Mr. Tucker he wrote in cordial acknowledgment of the honour that had been done to him; and never, even in his most confidential moments to the most cherished of his friends, expressed a feeling of disappointment:—

"The additional mark of confidence afforded by the Court in my nomination to the provisional charge of the office of Governor-General, is, as you suppose, exceedingly gratifying to me. On the arrival of Lord Heytesbury, if the Agra Government be not by that time abolished, I shall return to my post in the Agra Presidency. The duty of the Governor there is highly interesting. Nevertheless, the Government ought, I think, to be abolished, as unnecessarily expensive. . . . . I can never sufficiently thank you for your generous exertions in my favour. As I never expected them to succeed, I am not disappointed by the result which Lord Heytesbury's appointment indicates. We hear that the Ministry offered the office to Elphinstone. It is honourable to them if they did so. I hope that you will approve our intended press law. Be assured that it is the best that could be passed, and quite as safe as any other. The people are afraid that Lord Heytesbury, being a Tory, will stop it; for as time was

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biographers and historians. It is hard to say how much their labours will be diminished, and, what is of more consequence, their accuracy increased, by the facility afforded them of calculating with certainty the period at which letters bearing any particular date, must have reached any part of India.

given for ample discussion and deliberation, he may be here before it becomes law. It was proposed before the appointment of any new Governor-General was known."—[*May* 24, 1835.]

The letters now acknowledged furnish fresh proof, already superabundant, of your constant friendly care of me. I am not surprised at the result. That in which Whigs and Tories agree must be right. And the only thing in which they have agreed has been in rejecting me as Governor-General. It was quite natural; and the only thing that surprised me was, that I should have been thought of. I am proud of that, and by no means disappointed by the failure.

"This will find you enjoying repose for a season, after your highly distinguished reign at the head of the Court of Directors, of which the character has never been more raised and upheld than by you—whether with regard to its independent and spirited bearing at home, or to its just dealings in the administration of India. I conclude that the Court will avail itself of your return to your post next April, to place you again in the chair to which you have done so much honour. Your conduct towards me has been most generous, and I can never sufficiently thank you. We are getting on in India quietly."—[*June* 7, 1835.]

And because they were "getting on quietly," Metcalfe, feeling that the position which he then temporarily occupied would give additional weight to his opinions, deemed that the season was opportune for a deliberate review of the state and prospects of the British empire in the East, of the dangers which threatened it, and the measures which would most conduce to its safety. It has been said that he was always keenly alive to the insecurity of our position in India. This, indeed, had long been regarded as Metcalfe's weak point; and his friends often expressed their surprise, that one who was generally "so sound" should, in this particular instance, entertain and propound opinions which were then conceived to be those only of weak-minded alarmists. People smiled when he said that they would wake up some fine morning and find that they had lost India; but he had been talking and writing in

this strain for many years,* and now that he was Governor-General of India, he deemed it his bounden duty to place upon record his opinions with respect to the best means of preparing the State to meet the dangers which continually threatened it, whenever they might be brought by adverse circumstances into active operation. Lord William Bentinck had left behind him an elaborate minute on the defence of the country, with especial reference to the probabilities of a Russian invasion. Metcalfe had no apprehensions on that score. He believed that our real dangers were from within; and that those hostile influences were only to be counteracted by an overawing display of military force. "We can retain our dominion," he had written some little time before, "only by a large military establishment; and without a considerable force of European troops, the fidelity of our army could not be relied upon." But he had no very decided opinions upon this point, and he was rather inclined to combat the views of Lord William Bentinck, who had spoken of the native army in India as the most expensive and the most inefficient in the world; and who had declared that our only internal danger was from the doubtful fidelity of the sepoys. From the elaborate minute which Metcalfe then wrote, in reply to his predecessor, I am tempted to make some extracts,

* As far back as 1814, he had written: "Until the Government at home be convinced that our situation in India is beset with dangers, and that we have still to make further great exertions to secure our safety, there can be little hope that we shall long retain the dominions that we have acquired. Our situation in India has always been precarious. It is still precarious. We are still a handful of Europeans governing an immense empire without any firm hold of the country, having warlike and powerful enemies on all our frontiers, and the spirit of disaffection dormant, but rooted, among our subjects." "Our native army," he said, at the same time, "is certainly a phenomenon, the more so as there is no heartfelt attachment to the Government on the part of our native troops."

prefacing them with the following passage of a more general nature, from a paper written some time before, in which he thus emphatically dwells upon the insecurity of our position in India:—

"Our hold is so precarious that a very little mismanagement might accomplish our expulsion; and the course of events may be of itself sufficient without any mismanagement. We are, to appearance, more powerful in India now than we ever were. Nevertheless our downfall may be short work, when it commences; it will probably be rapid; and the world will wonder more at the suddenness with which our immense empire may vanish, than it has done at the surprising conquest that we have achieved. The cause of this precariousness is that our power does not rest on actual strength but upon impression. Our whole real strength is in the few European regiments, speaking comparatively, that are scattered singly over the vast space of subjugated India. That is the only portion of our soldiery whose hearts are with us, and whose constancy can be relied on in the hour of trial. All our native establishments, military and civil, are the followers of fortune; they serve us for their livelihood, and generally serve us well. From a sense of what is due to the hand which feeds them, which is one of the virtues that they most extol, they may often display fidelity under trying circumstances; but in their inward feelings they partake more or less of the universal disaffection which prevails against us, not from bad government but from natural and irresistible antipathy; and were the wind to change —to use a native expression—and to set in steadily against us, we could not expect that their sense of honour, although there might be splendid instances of devotion, would keep the mass on our side in opposition to the common feeling which, with one view, might for a time unite all India from one end to the other—Empires grow old, decay, and perish. Ours in India can hardly be called old, but seems destined to be short-lived. We appear to have passed the brilliancy and vigour of our youth, and it may be that we have reached a premature old age. We have ceased to be the wonder that we were to the natives; the charm which once encompassed us has been dissolved, and our subjects have had time to inquire why they have been subdued. The consequences of the inquiry may appear hereafter. If these speculations are not devoid of foundation, they are useful in diverting our minds to the contemplation of the real nature of our power, and in preventing a delusive

belief of its impregnability. Our greatest danger is not from a Russian power, but from the fading of the impression of our invincibility from the minds of the native inhabitants of India. The disaffection which would root us out abundantly exists; the concurrence of circumstances sufficient to call it into general action may at any time happen."*

"DANGERS OF OUR POSITION IN INDIA.—Our danger does not lie in the military force alone of native states, but in the spirit by which they are actuated towards us; and still more in the spirit of our subjects from one end of India to the other. We have no hold on their affections; more than that, disaffection is universal. So that what to a power supported by the affections of its subjects would be a slight disaster, might to us be an irreparable calamity. The little reverse which we met with at Ramoo, in the Burman war, sounded throughout India like our repulse at the first siege of Bhurtpore, magnified and exaggerated as if it had been our death-knell. The Commander-in-Chief was said to have been killed, and the Governor-General to have put an end to himself in despair by swallowing polished diamonds. Ramoo became so celebrated, that although the place is an insignificant one in the district of Chittagong, in our own territory, never before generally heard of, the word is now used by the natives as the name of the Burman empire, or of any place to the eastward beyond sea, and an idea of something formidable and dreadful is attached to it.

"Some say that our empire in India rests on opinion, others on main force. It in fact depends on both. We could not keep the country by opinion if we had not a considerable force; and no force that we could pay would be sufficient if it were not aided by the opinion of our invincibility. Our force does not operate so much by its actual strength as by the impression which it produces, and that impression is the opinion by which we hold India.

"Internal insurrection, therefore, is one of the greatest of our

* This is part of a paper, written in reply to some questions propounded in England, at the time of the Parliamentary Inquiries of 1832-33, and submitted by Government to the principal authorities on questions of Indian Government. Whether this paper was ever officially sent in I do not know. It does not appear in the printed replies to these questions in the Parliamentary papers.

dangers, or, rather, becomes so when the means of quelling it are at a distance. It is easy to decide it, because insurgents may not have the horse, foot and artillery of a regular army; but it becomes serious if we have not those materials at hand. Nothing can be a stronger proof of our weakness in the absence of a military force, even when it is not far removed, than the history of such insurrections as have occurred. The civil power and all semblance of the existence of our government are instantly swept away by the torrent. We need not go far back to show that in the neighbourhood of the metropolis of British India, within a forced march from one of the largest of our military stations, our government was subverted throughout a considerable extent of territory; our magistrates, with all the power that they could collect, driven like chaff before the wind, and an insurrectionary authority established by a handful of men proclaiming the overthrow of our dominion, and the establishment of a new dynasty in the person of a leader of a band of fanatics. This state of things continued for several days, until the insurrection was suppressed by the application of military force, without which it is impossible to say to what extent it might have proceeded, so completely were the insurgents masters of the neighbouring country. As the spirit of insurrection is catching, this affair was soon followed by an insurrection of the Dangur Coles, a race previously orderly and submissive and remarkable for industrious and laborious habits out of their own country. No sooner had insurrection broken out than it spread like wildfire. Not a Cole in the country was free from the infection. All the inhabitants of other descriptions, the Rajah and a few chiefs excepted, who had strongholds or military means for their protection, were massacred or expelled. The officers of our administration and every sign of our government quickly disappeared. For a long time all the force that could be found on our part was not only inadequate to suppress the insurrection, but, although in able hands, could hardly resist it, and could not prevent its spreading, or do more than check it at one point. It required several months and a large force to put down this insurrection; but that of the Chooans, another wild race, soon followed, which baffled the first force and the second force employed, and kept us engaged for many months also before it was extinguished.

"His lordship, however, sees further danger in the spread of knowledge and the operations of the press. I do not for my own

part, anticipate danger as a certain consequence from these causes. I see so much danger in the ignorance, fanaticism, and barbarism of our subjects, that I rest on the spread of knowledge some hope of greater strength and security. Men will be better able to appreciate the good and evil of our rule; and if the good predominate, they will know that they may lose by a change. Without reckoning on the affection of any, it seems probable that those of the natives who would most deprecate and least promote our overthrow, would be the best-informed and most enlightened among them, unless they had themselves, individually, ambitious dreams of power. If, however, the extension of knowledge is to be a new source of danger—and I will not pretend confidently to predict the contrary—it is one altogether unavoidable. It is our duty to extend knowledge, whatever may be the result; and spread it would, even if we impeded it. The time is passed when the operations of the press could be effectually restrained, even if that course would be any source of safety, which must be very doubtful. Nothing so precarious could in prudence be trusted to. If, therefore, increase of danger be really to be apprehended from increase of knowledge, it is what we must cheerfully submit to. We must not try to avert it, and if we did we should fail."

"THE EUROPEAN ARMY IN INDIA.—Considering the possible disaffection of our native army as our only internal danger, and the want of physical strength and moral energy as rendering them unable to contend with a European enemy, his lordship proposes that the European portion of our army should be one-fourth, and eventually one-third, in proportion to the strength of our native army. He considers this as requiring a force of 30,000 Europeans in India. In the expediency of having at least this force of Europeans, even in ordinary times, I entirely concur; that is, if we can pay them. But the limit to this, and every other part of our force, must be regulated by our means. If we attempted to fix it according to our wants, we should soon be without the means of maintaining any army. Thirty thousand European troops would be vastly inadequate for the purpose of meeting the imagined Russian invasion, for we should more require European troops in the interior of India at that time than at any other. To have our army on a footing calculated for that event is impossible. Our army cannot well be greater than it is, owing to want of means. It cannot well be less, owing to our other wants. Such as it is in extent, it is our duty to make it as efficient as we can, with or without the prospect of a Russian invasion; and this is

the only way in which we can prepare for that or any other distant and unceftain crisis. On the approach of such an event we must have reinforcements of European troops from England to any amount required, and we must increase our native force according to the exigency of the time. We could not long exist in a state of adequate preparation, as we should be utterly ruined by the expense."

"CHARACTER OF THE NATIVE ARMY.—The late Governor-General condemns our Indian army, in a sweeping sentence, as being the most expensive and least efficient in the world. If it were so, how should we be here? Is it no proof of efficiency that it has conquered all India? Is it no proof of efficiency that India is more universally tranquil owing to our Indian army than it ever was under any native Government or Governments that we read of? If our Indian army be so expensive, why do we not employ European troops alone to maintain India? Why but because Europeans are so much more expensive that we could not pay a sufficient number? If our Indian army be so inefficient, why do we incur the expense of making soldiers of the natives? Why do we not entertain the same number of undisciplined people who would cost much less? Why but because then we should lose the country from the inefficiency of our native force? If, therefore, the Indian army be preferable to a European force on account of its cheapness, and to other native troops on account of its efficiency; if we cannot substitute any other force cheaper and more efficient; how can it justly be said to be the most expensive and least efficient army in the world? It enables us to conquer and keep India. If it performs well every duty required of it, hard work in quarters, good service in the field, how can it be subject to the imputation of inefficiency? The proof of its cheapness and of its efficiency is, that we cannot substitute any other description of force at once so cheap and so efficient."

"ORGANIZATION OF THE INDIAN ARMY.—One important measure proposed by the late Governor-General is the entire abolition of the Bombay army, and its union, half to the Bengal, half to the Madras army. I am not aware of any advantage to be derived from this measure, except the saving that might be effected by the abolition of the portion of the staff which would cease to be necessary when the Bombay army ceased to be a separate army; but I can hardly think that this advantage would be sufficient to make the measure desirable. It would, I imagine, be a source of great discontent to the whole of the Bombay army, and of gratifi-

cation to no one. If there were sufficient reasons for uniting all the armies of the several Presidencies in one, which I apprehend there are not, the Bombay army would share the fate of the others and all would be amalgamated; but while there are separate armies, and separate Presidencies, I cannot see any sufficient motive for the abolition of the Bombay army, and the infliction of the wound which would thereby be given to the feelings of that body, and of the whole service of that Presidency. For so great a change some very important benefit ought to be shown, which is not at present visible. The amount of consequent reduction of expense has not been stated, and would probably be insignificant compared with the magnitude of annoyance.

"The junction of the Ceylon force with that of India appears, for unity of power, to be desirable; but while the Government of Ceylon is distinct there will probably be impediments to a junction of the forces.

"The introduction of Malay troops into the Indian army is another question agitated in his lordship's minute. I am not competent to offer any decided opinion on this subject, from a want of sufficient knowledge of the Malay character." The general impression of it is unfavourable, but I have met with gentlemen accustomed to it, who speak highly of it. If Malays would make orderly and faithful soldiers, I should be inclined for their admission, on the ground that our native infantry is composed too much of men of one class, actuated by one common feeling, and that it is expedient to have a variety, in order that one description, in case of necessity, may be used to maintain order in another. But this purpose would not be well accomplished by the introduction of less orderly, or less efficient, or more expensive troops; and what the Malays might prove in these respects, I do not know. There cannot be a more orderly body of soldiers in the world than our Bengal native infantry; and caution ought to be exercised before we substitute for any portion of them another class of men.

"In all that Lord William Bentinck says in favour of that description of our force which is called irregular, or still more improperly, local cavalry, perhaps from its not being local, I have the honour entirely to concur, which I am always more happy to do than to differ from one whose mind has been so purely and anxiously devoted to the public welfare. I regard the irregular horse as a most useful and valuable description of troops. I wish that all our native cavalry were of this description, and all

our regular cavalry European. I do not mean by this remark to recommend such a change. All such changes, even if they were generally desired, require great consideration. Our regular native cavalry has grown up as a branch of our establishment, has hitherto done its duty well, and ought not to be inconsiderately broken up. But if I had to form a cavalry army for India, without the previous existence of the regular native troops, I would make the regular cavalry European, and the native cavalry of the same description as that body now termed the Irregulars or the Local Horse. I do not know that the late Governor-General goes so far in his opinion on this subject, but in all that I have seen of his sentiments in approbation of that description of our cavalry I fully concur."

All through the hot weather and rainy season of 1835, Sir Charles Metcalfe remained at Calcutta as Provisional Governor-General, expecting the arrival of Lord Heytesbury. With that nobleman, although he differed from him greatly in his views of European politics, he was prepared to co-operate heartily and energetically; and the cordial manner in which the Governor-General elect wrote to him, saying how much he should depend upon the assistance of so experienced an Indian statesman as Sir Charles Metcalfe, strengthened the kindly feelings with which he was prepared to greet his successor.

Throughout all the period of his residence at Calcutta, whether as member of Council, Vice-President, or Governor-General, his liberality was extreme; his charity beyond expression bountiful. Few could measure their extent. There was a continual, quiet, unobtrusive stream of benevolence ever flowing on. It seemed as though he held the high emoluments of his office only in trust for others. When he was Governor-General, receiving the magnificent allowances of that high office, a much-esteemed member of his staff endeavoured to persuade him to take the opportunity, as he then contemplated retirement from public

life, of adding something to his fortune? "My dear fellow, Stokes," was his reply, "I do not consider the money I receive as Governor-General as my own. It is intended to be expended in supporting the position. But I am saving, notwithstanding, in spite of myself."

One or two examples of his generosity, which necessarily found their way before the public, may be given in this place. An application was made to him in behalf of an educational institution in Calcutta, known as the "Parental Academic Institution," which, owing to its benevolent exertions, had involved itself in debt. Metcalfe at once inquired into the circumstances of the case; ascertained the sum required (500*l.*) to rescue the institution from the obligations which depressed it; and sent a cheque for the entire amount.

On another occasion, a gentleman, who had projected the scheme of a Retiring Fund, which it was believed would be very advantageous to the military service, waited on Sir Charles Metcalfe, when officiating as Governor-General of India, to ask the assistance of the Government to enable him to proceed to England to carry out the necessary arrangements for the advancement of the proposed measure. To this application, Metcalfe, having inquired what was the amount requisite for the expenses of his voyage (600*l.*), replied that he had no power to send the applicant to England at the public expense; but he begged Mr. Curnin's acceptance of the sum named from his private purse.*

When he was Vice-President in Council, it was represented to him that an organ, which had been purchased, on the faith of a subscription from the congregation, for one of the churches at Calcutta, had not been paid for, and that

* The contemporary annalists say, "with an additional sum for his expenses in England."

as there was a chance of its being seized under legal authority, it was hoped that Government would consent to make a pecuniary advance to rescue it from the sheriff's officers. To this application he replied, as in the preceding instance, that he could not apply the public money to such purposes; but he afterwards sent a draft on his private agents for the whole of the required amount.

His charities and beneficences to sufferers of all classes were past counting. He had always been a large contributor to those subscriptions, which, before the pension funds of the Indian services were in full operation, had so frequently been instituted for the relief of the widows and children of deceased officers. On one occasion, before he was a member of the Government, a subscription having been opened in behalf of the family of a staff-officer, with whom Metcalfe, in earlier days, had been in habits of intimacy, he requested that his name might be entered in the list for a contribution of 10,000 rupees. But the gentleman who had charge of the subscription-list, an old and very dear friend, unwilling to take advantage of this excessive liberality, declined accepting a donation of more than half the amount.

Yet, in spite of this continued generosity, and the bountiful hospitality which he at all times exercised, his fortune continued to increase. He owed this principally to a habit, formed, as has been seen, in early life, of keeping a very exact account of his receipts and expenditure. He would frequently counsel young men against suffering any laxity to creep into the management of their pecuniary affairs, and declare that what begins in carelessness may sometimes end in dishonesty. He not only kept the most minute accounts, but continued to preserve them; and I believe that at any time he could have ascertained the

precise amount to a rupee of the sum expended by him in any given month since he returned from his expedition to Madras. *

* It is to be borne in mind that Sir Charles Metcalfe not only received very large allowances during a period of a quarter of a century, but had inherited a considerable private fortune, which was very carefully husbanded. I believe that his affairs were managed, with great judgment, by a confidential friend.

CHAPTER V.

[1835.]

LIBERATION OF THE INDIAN PRESS.

Previous History of the Press—The Censorship—Opinions of Lord Hastings, Mr. Adam, and Lord William Bentinck—Unsatisfactory State of the Law—Metcalfe's Opinions—Correspondence with Lord Clare—Council Minute—Act for the Removal of Restrictions—Address to Sir Charles Metcalfe—His Answer—Foundation of the Metcalfe Hall.

It was in the autumn of 1835, that, under the auspices of Sir Charles Metcalfe, an act was passed by the Supreme Council of India, the tendency of which was to remove the restrictions which had previously been imposed upon the freedom of the Indian press.

The periodical press of India was then more than half a century old. It sprang up in the time of Warren Hastings, and with it the utmost latitude of expression that could be tolerated by a society very tolerant of immorality and indecorum. Its restrictions were those only imposed by the bodily fears of the editor and contributors, the objects of whose malignant commentaries were rather the leading members of the European community of Calcutta than the magnates of the local Government. The first Indian newspaper, known as *Hicky's Gazette*,* teemed with scurrility of the worst kind. Lawless itself, it was naturally exposed to the counteraction of such laws as individual men made for the occasion, and the wild justice of revenge was administered with so much vigour that Mr. Hicky had not

* First published in 1781.

only to complain of ordinary assaults upon his person, but of serious attempts, in return for his assassination of character, to assassinate him in the flesh." Such licentiousness as this had a natural tendency in due time to remedy itself. A journal, the common aliment of which is offal and garbage of the filthiest kind, must be destroyed by the innate force of its corruption. There was little vitality in *Hicky's Gazette*; but it was the progenitor of healthier offspring which lived longer and fared better; and the Indian periodical press was now firmly established.

With the improved moral tone of society during the administration of Lord Cornwallis and Sir John Shore, the respectability of the Indian press necessarily made steady progress. The papers began to concern themselves more about public affairs, and less about the private scandal of the settlement. They were for the most part harmless publications, by no means remarkable for brilliant writing, or for any writing at all beyond what was taken from the European papers, and a few items of local news. They had little or nothing to say against Lord Cornwallis and his government. When they spoke of him at all, they commonly spoke of him with respect. No public inconvenience arose from the diffusion of such information as they contained; and it would appear that, therefore, they were left very much to themselves. But when Lord Wellesley arrived in India we were engaged in a great contest with the French, who were endeavouring to establish a dominant influence in India, and intriguing with the principal native dynasties for the destruction of the British power in the East. It was a great crisis, which permitted the intervention of no scruples and compunctions, and seemed to justify measures which in ordinary conjunctures would be without justification or apology. At such a time the unwary publication of items

of intelligence might be fraught with pernicious results. Lord Wellesley believed that it was necessary to subject the press to a rigorous supervision. A censorship was established. Stringent regulations were established for the guidance of editors and proprietors, the violation of which brought down upon the offender the penalty of deportation. The license under which he was permitted to reside in a British settlement was cancelled; and he was sent out of the country, to explode at home in violent speeches and pamphlets about the liberty of the subject and the irresponsible tyranny of English satraps in the despotic East.

During the administration of Lord Minto this dread of the free diffusion of knowledge became a chronic disease, which was continually afflicting the members of Government with all sorts of hypochondriacal day-fears and night-mares, in which visions of the printing press and the Bible were ever making their flesh to creep, and their hair to stand erect with horror. It was our policy in those days to keep the natives of India in the profoundest possible state of barbarism and darkness, and every attempt to diffuse the light of knowledge among the people, either of our own or the independent states, was vehemently opposed and resented.* Whilst the press was regarded almost in the light of an infernal machine, of course the

* A curious illustration of this may be gathered from the records of the Hyderabad Residency. Captain Sydenham, who then represented our interests at that Court, wishing to gratify a desire expressed by the Nizam to see some of the appliances of European science, procured for him three specimens, in the shape of an air-pump, a printing press, and the model of a man-of-war. Having mentioned this in his demi-official correspondence with the chief secretary, he was censured for having placed in the hands of a native Prince so dangerous an instrument as a printing press. Upon this the Resident wrote back that the Government need be under no apprehensions, for that the Nizam had taken so little

censorship was continued. The duty of emasculating the editor's sheets was entrusted to one of the Government Secretaries; and there are men still amongst us who remember the business of expurgation which was part of their official duties. Under this system the press remained in a miserable state of restraint throughout the administration of Lord Minto and the earlier years of Lord Hastings' Government. But the latter nobleman came out to India with more liberal views, and did not hesitate publicly to declare his opinion that it was advantageous to Government that its acts should be subjected to public discussion, and that the purer the motives of a Governor were, the more willing he would be to submit them to such scrutiny. The restrictions which had been imposed upon the free expression of opinion were now gradually relaxed. In 1818 the *Calcutta Journal* was established, and conducted with a freedom and a spirit which startled the old Tories of Calcutta. But Lord Hastings could not be induced, by the exhortations of Mr. Adam or other Government functionaries of the old school, to curb what they called the licentiousness of the first public journal in Calcutta that was at all worthy of the name. The acts of Government were now for the first time canvassed with equal boldness and talent; and its officers censured or ridiculed in the columns either of bitter editors or still more bitter correspondents. Now was it that the vehemence of "Brutus" and the virulence of "Cleophas" made many a galled jade wince in the high places about

interest in the Press, that he had not even made a present to the compositors who had come round from Madras to exhibit the application to practical purposes of the implements of their craft. But he added, that if the Government still felt any uneasiness about the presence of this dangerous instrument of civilization at the Court of the Nizam, he could easily obtain admission to the Tosha-Khana (or Treasure-house), and there so cripple the press as to ensure its never being in a fit state to do duty again!

Chowringhee. Perhaps the assailant and the assailed sat side by side at the breakfast-table on which the uncastigated sheets were lying; for "Brutus" was not, improbably, a rising member of the civil service, and "Cleophas" a liberal-minded major on the general staff. Lord Hastings watched the progress of this freedom of expression; perhaps learnt some useful lessons from it; and contented himself with quietly exhorting an editor to restrain his intemperance, and to keep himself within convenient bounds.

But he went. There was an interregnum. And then John Adam arose, and smote heavily at the Indian press. He was a conscientious, and, in many respects, a high-minded man; but he had been all his life harnessed in a go-cart of official routine, and he could not divest himself of the prejudices which he had imbibed in his youth. He was one of the old oligarchy of Calcutta—an honest, uncorrupted, good-hearted, and very able man, with a mind warped by the chronic condition of bureaucracy, to which he had been so many years condemned. He had long been labouring under a profound conviction that the interests of the state demanded an immediate suppression of the "licentiousness" of the Indian press; and when, as senior member of Council, he succeeded, in 1823, to the vacancy occasioned by the departure of Lord Hastings, and became temporarily Governor-General of India, he determined to put forth the hand of authority, and strike down the growing evil which he had so long vainly deplored. An occasion was soon found—it mattered not how trifling. The blow was struck; Mr. Buckingham was deported, ruined, and became for years a continual running sore in the flesh of the East India Company and the British Parliament. But this arbitrary stretch of authority did not silence the Indian press. It had been discovered, that although the Governor-General

might, by a stroke of the pen, send a British subject to England, he could not banish a native of India. Straightway a De Souza or Derozio, or a gentleman bearing some other name signifying that he was an East Indian, became enthroned as the nominal editor of an offending paper. The danger of deportation was nothing to him. John Adam could not send him out of the country; but he could make stringent laws for the governance of the press, and on the 14th of March and 5th of April, 1823, regulations passed, which took all the pith and manhood out of the journals of the day, and the authority of the Supreme Court was called in to give them full effect.

Lord Amherst does not seem to have had much sympathy with the arbitrary measures of his predecessor; but for a little time, especially as Adam's opinions were shared by the principal ministerial functionaries at the Presidency, he naturally fell into his ways; and, accordingly, the strong tyranny which he found established, was suffered to have temporary sway. But when he began to think more for himself, the natural mildness of his disposition revolted against the oppressiveness of the old Toryism of Calcutta, and the restrictions which had been imposed upon the free utterance of opinion were gradually relaxed. During the last two years of his administration, persecution ceased from off the face of the land, and the journals of the Presidency possessed themselves in quietness and peace.

Then Lord William Bentinck came, a Liberal to the very core; and the press, although the old restrictive regulations continued in force, became practically free. He was wont to say, snapping his fingers as he spoke, that he did not care a straw for the vituperations of the press. He esteemed it, however, as a friend, and appreciated it as an auxiliary to good government. He did not scruple,

indeed, to say, after he had been some years in India, that he had learnt more from it than from all the other sources of information which had been open to him since he had assumed the Government of the country. And yet no man had been so much censured in the columns of the newspapers, because no man had been the agent of measures more injuriously affecting the interests of the writing classes—the civil and military services of the Company—by the more unreflecting members of which he was cordially hated and continually reviled.

On one occasion only did Lord William Bentinck contemplate a departure from the system of non-interference to which he had always rigidly adhered. The obnoxious half-batta order, which it had been his hard duty to carry into effect, had thrown the officers of the Indian army into a paroxysm of excitement, from which they found some relief in the act of writing denunciatory letters to the papers. And they availed themselves of the practical liberty enjoyed by the press to the utmost possible extent. The newspaper offices were deluged with letters from all ranks and all branches of the service—letters taking every conceivable shape, from a seditious appeal to the army at large to a plain financial statement of a subaltern's monthly disbursements. It was, in every respect, a fortunate circumstance that the newspapers were open to these appeals. The press, indeed, acted as a great safety-valve. Discontent, which might have become dangerous, expended itself in a flow of ink. The appearance of half a dozen columns on the half-batta order, day after day, in each of the morning papers, was such a triumph in itself, that it is not too much to affirm that it may have averted a mutiny. To Lord William Bentinck, who, in the greater number of these letters, was attacked as virulently as though he had been the originator instead of only the executor of the obnoxious measure, all this, as far as he

was personally concerned, was a matter of extreme indifference. But when, in 1830, the final orders of the Court of Directors were received—orders which intimated a determination, in spite of all references and appeals, to adhere to their original resolution—and the letter containing them was about to be published for general information, the Governor-General, anticipating the torrents of invective which would be poured out against the Court, bethought himself whether it were not his duty to that body to curb such expressions of disloyalty, and for once to exercise the powers of Government by putting a gag into the mouth of the press. And he seems to have arrived at the conclusion that it would be his duty so to act in such a conjuncture.

Sir Charles Metcalfe was at this time a member of the Supreme Council. Five years before, in a letter to a familiar friend, he had said, with reference to the freedom of the press, that "if he were sovereign lord and master, he would let it have full swing." * This opinion had lost none of its cogency in the interval; and he now regarded with strong feelings of regret, and not without some lively apprehensions of evil, the contemplated interference of which Lord William Bentinck had spoken. He, therefore, drew up the following minute, the reasoning of which was not to be resisted:—

"*September* 6, 1830.

"I regret much to see that it is the intention of the Governor-General to interfere with the liberty of the press on the occasion of the publication of the letter of the Honourable the Court of Directors regarding the memorials of the officers of the army on the subject of the half-batta restrictions.'

"It appears to me that the intended measure will excite fresh feelings of disgust, which it is wholly unnecessary to create.

"Hitherto the utmost freedom of discussion has been permitted

* *Ante* p. 15.

on this subject, and generally on all subjects, for years past; and I cannot see any difference between the present order of the Court and their former order, that should make it expedient to allow the one to be censured, and to prohibit all comment on the other. The former order was meant to be final as much as the present one.

"I am persuaded that the freedom of discussion allowed in the half-batta question has been attended with good effects. It has afforded a vent for the expression of the feelings which a most unpopular measure excited; and it gave an assurance to those who conceived themselves injured that their complaints were at least made known, and must attract attention.

"I think, on the present occasion, that it will be infinitely better to allow anything to be said that can be said, than to furnish a new source of discontent by crushing the expression of public opinion.

"I do not apprehend that anything can be said worse than has already been published. The positive operation of time is producing its usual effect. The feelings which prevailed in the army are, in some degree, allayed. Their complaints have been heard, their arguments are exhausted, and the subject is almost worn out. The order of the Court of Directors is not altogether unexpected. Its publication may be followed by a few letters in the newspapers, which will do no harm, and then the matter will finally subside. But the attempt to prevent the ebullition of any feeling will cause fresh irritation, and be construed as a new grievance.

"Viewing the question more generally, it is, whether an arbitrary interference with the press shall be substituted for the freedom which has for many years been allowed.

"I have, for my own part, always advocated the liberty of the press, believing its benefits to outweigh its mischiefs; and I continue of the same opinion.

"Admitting that the liberty of the press, like other liberties of the subject, may be suspended, when the safety of the State requires such a sacrifice, I cannot, as a consequence, acknowledge that the present instance ought to be made an exception to the usual practice of the Government; for if there were danger to the State either way, there would be more, I should think, in suppressing the publication of opinions, than in keeping the valve open, by which bad humours might evaporate. To prevent men from thinking and feeling is impossible; and I believe it to be wiser to let them give vent to their temporary anger in anonymous letters in the newspapers, the writers of which letters remain

unknown, than to make that anger permanent, by forcing them to smother it within their own breasts, ever ready to burst out. It is no more necessary to take notice of such letters now than it was before.

"The Government, which interferes at its pleasure with the press, becomes responsible for all that it permits to be published. We continually see in the Calcutta papers gross abuse of the public authorities; and we answered to the complaint of one, that this Government did not interfere with the press, or something to that effect. I think that we made a similar assertion in a communication to the Governor of a foreign settlement. How can we say such things at one time, and at another interfere with the Press as it is now proposed to do?

"If I could think it sound policy to shackle the press, I should prefer the steady operation of the censorship, or any fixed rule, to the occasional interference of the Government by its arbitrary will. Every letter addressed by the Government to the editor of a newspaper, has always appeared to me to be derogatory to the Government; and the Bengal Government has been exposed to more ridicule from this sort of correspondence than from any other cause. It is true that the power now exists of converting ridicule into terror, by the destruction of property; but who can desire to see a newspaper impertinence brought to such an end? Even punishment has sometimes proved a farce, the real offender soon re-appearing in the field with new honour, as a pretended martyr.

"For all these reasons I object to the measure proposed, considering it preferable, on every account, to leave to the press the uninterrupted enjoyment of its supposed freedom, and to the public the means which it now practically possesses of expressing its sentiments on all subjects, without any other restriction than those of law and discretion.

"C. T. METCALFE."

The language of this is clear and emphatic. The same language had been used five years before, and was to be used five years afterwards. "I have always advocated the liberty of the press, and I continue of the same opinion."

He continued steadily to advocate these principles whenever an opportunity was presented to him. In the spring of 1832, when he was Vice-President in Council, a

letter appeared in one of the Calcutta papers, which gave great offence to the Governor of Bombay. It was a letter on that most inexhaustible of all subjects of newspaper-comment, the distribution of patronage. Such comments are extremely harmless, for when it is considered that where one man is appointed to a vacant office, probably half-a-dozen are disappointed, the likelihood of some abusive commentary on the subject is so great, that every sensible reader understands the source of it, and accepts it for just what it is worth. The strictures, however, which a certain "Cleophas," of Fort St. George, in the plenitude of his public virtue, passed upon some appointments made by Mr. Lushington and Lord Clare, so excited the indignation of the latter, that he wrote a letter to Lord William Bentinck, calling upon him to "force the editor to make a public and ample apology, retracting every word he had stated to the prejudice of Lord Clare, or to withdraw the editor's license." A copy of this letter was forwarded to Sir Charles Metcalfe, on whom, as the head of the local Government, would have fallen the duty of taking any steps to carry out the wishes of the Governor of Bombay, and to whom also the latter confidently appealed for redress. But Metcalfe declined to interfere, and thus explained the motives by which he was impelled:—

"SIR CHARLES METCALFE TO LORD CLARE.

"*Barrackpore, May* 31, 1832.

"My dear Lord,—I have had the honour of receiving your lordship's letter of the 16th inst., with a copy of the one addressed to the Governor-General, whose orders on the subject, if any be issued, it will be the duty of the Vice-President in Council to carry into effect. My own opinion, I acknowledge, is, that this Government cannot with any consistency interfere with the press in the manner required by your lordship, after allowing it so long to run its course uncontrolled. This Government has, for several years past, treated the press as if it were free. For my own part,

I can say that since the local administration has been in my hands, the press has not once been interfered with in the slightest degree; and so satisfied am I that this is now the most unobjectionable course, that I shall continue to follow it as long as I have any discretionary power on the subject. Your lordship considers the Calcutta press as under the absolute dominion of the Supreme Government, and in a great degree it would be so, if the local laws and regulations which exist regarding it were enforced; but they have long since been virtually abolished, and the press here is practically under no other dominion than that of the English law. Whatever may be the good or evil of this freedom, it would now be a revolution to destroy it, and in that case, Calcutta would be the only Presidency where restrictions would exist. The freedom of the press would rise up at Madras and Bombay, where no local laws are in force to restrain it, and where, although the power of transporting refractory editors may keep Europeans in awe, an East-Indian or native editor could any day set the Government at defiance; the actual occurrence of which difficulty was the real cause of the abolition of the censorship and the consequent liberty of the press here, during the administration of the Marquis of Hastings. Your lordship appears to be of opinion that the Governor of Madras and Bombay only are slandered in the Calcutta papers; but if you took the trouble to read all the trash that is published, your lordship would see that the Governor-General is continually libelled. It is not longer ago than this morning that I met with an attack on his lordship for an exercise of his patronage, transferred from a Madras paper. I am a much less conspicuous person, and on questions of patronage, as I have none at my disposal, might hope to be protected by my insignificance. Nevertheless, I sometimes find myself calumniated for a pretended abuse of patronage with which I have had no concern. As far as regards myself, it is my practice and intention to treat attacks by the press with indifference. If ever driven to notice them, I should pursue the course adverted to in your lordship's letter to the Governor-General, and bring an action against the editor. This appears to me to be now the only remedy that can consistently be adopted here, but I should have recourse to it in my own case with the utmost reluctance, for the English law seems to me to afford, at the best, very inadequate redress for calumny, while the proceedings in Court often add further insult to the injury.

"I am, &c., &c.,

"C. T. METCALFE."

Nothing can be clearer or more emphatic than this; or more consistent with all his previous utterances.

Still, for more than two years after this letter was written, Lord William Bentinck remained at the head of the Indian Government, and still the press continued practically free. No new act was passed affecting the interests of the public journals, but the propriety of framing some distinct regulations on the subject was considered in Council, and generally acknowledged. The failing health, however, of Lord William Bentinck, his absence from the Presidency, and perhaps other reasons with which I am not acquainted, caused the proposed legislation to be delayed. In the mean while the community of Calcutta were growing impatient, and in the cold weather of 1834-35, just as Metcalfe was starting for Allahabad, they presented a petition to the Governor-General, calling upon him to repeal the old press regulations passed by Mr. John Adam. On the 27th of January, 1835, the Governor-General received the petition. An official answer was returned, saying that "the unsatisfactory state of the laws relating to the press had already attracted the notice of his lordship in Council, and he trusted that in no long time a system would be established which, while it gave security to every person engaged in the fair discussion of public measures, would effectually secure the Government against sedition, and individuals against calumny." But in "no long time" Lord William Bentinck returned to England, and Sir Charles Metcalfe took his place at the head of the Supreme Government.

He was now "sovereign lord and master," and the opportunity for which he had long yearned was fairly before him. He found that the Council, too, were ripe for immediate legislation. Mr. Macaulay, whose first great literary success had been a glowing panegyric on

John Milton, was not likely now to be backward in giving all the weight of his authority in furtherance of a measure for the bestowal on the people of the liberty of unlicensed printing. There was nothing to induce a pause. The question had been fully debated. The subject was well understood. It is true that a new Governor-General, appointed by a Tory Ministry, was supposed to be on his way to India; but there was no reason to believe that he would be a better judge of the propriety of such a measure than the mature Indian statesman now at the head of affairs.

The hour, indeed, was come. The man was ready. In April, the draft act for the future regulation of the press was drawn up and duly published. It declared the repeal of the Press Regulations of 1823 in the Bengal Presidency, and those of 1825 and 1827 in Bombay. It enacted, that the printer and publisher of all periodical works, within the Company's territories, containing public news, or comments on public news, should appear before the magistrates of the jurisdiction in which it should be published, and declare where it was to be printed and published. Every book or paper was thenceforth to bear the name of the printer and publisher. Every person having a printing press on his premises was to make declaration thereof; and for all violations of the provisions of the act, penalties of fine and imprisonment were decreed. But, beyond the necessity of making these declarations, there was no other restriction upon the liberty of the press.

These regulations gave great satisfaction. A public meeting was held, at which many of the principal people of Calcutta, European and native, attended, to give utterance to their approbation of this wise and enlightened measure. An address which had been drawn up with much careful consideration, was unanimously voted

to Sir Charles Metcalfe as the liberator of the Indian press.*

When Metcalfe received this address, he sat down to answer it—not in the cold barren language of official formality, but with a warmth, an earnestness, a freedom of utterance which, however little they might accord with the conventional reserve and exclusiveness of Indian statesmanship, he felt in his inmost heart were the qualities that should distinguish the manifesto invited by this public expression of gratitude and approbation. He had taken the gag out of the mouths of the people, and was he now to place it in his own? There was a characteristic manliness and honesty in the response, which suited well with the occasion. After declaring that all who doubted the liberty of the press were bound to prove that "the essence of good government is to cover the land with darkness," he proceed to say:—

"If their argument be, that the spread of knowledge may eventually be fatal to our rule in India, I close with them on that point, and maintain that, whatever may be the consequence, it is our duty to communicate the benefits of knowledge. If India could only be preserved as a part of the British Empire, by keeping its inhabitants in a state of ignorance, our domination would be a curse to the country, and ought to cease.

* After speaking of the fallacy of the opinion that a free press was incompatible with the character of the Indian Government, the address went on to say. "Lord Hastings expressed that opinion; Lord W. Bentinck implied it by permitting the press to be free; and your testimony has now been added to theirs. The experience of a whole life passed among the people of India, in its most remote and warlike provinces, and in its most turbulent times, renders this testimony the most valuable of all. We view this as one among other recent proofs that the Government of India is wisely and safely entrusted to those who are intimately acquainted with the course of its administration, and with the manners, opinions, and feelings of its people."

"But I see more ground for just apprehension in ignorance itself. I look to the increase of knowledge, with a hope that it may strengthen our empire; that it may remove prejudices, soften asperities, and substitute a rational conviction of the benefits of our government; that it may unite the people and their rulers in sympathy, and that the differences which separate them may be gradually lessened and ultimately annihilated. Whatever, however, be the will of Almighty Providence respecting the future Government of India, it is clearly our duty, as long as the charge be confided to our hands, to execute the trust to the best of our ability for the good of the people. The promotion of knowledge, of which the liberty of the press is one of the most efficient instruments, is manifestly an essential part of that duty. It cannot be that we are permitted by Divine authority to be here merely to collect the revenues of the country, pay the establishments necessary to keep possession, and get into debt to supply the deficiency. We are, doubtless, here for higher purposes, one of which is to pour the enlightened knowledge and civilization, the arts and sciences of Europe over the land, and thereby improve the condition of the people. Nothing surely is more likely to conduce to these ends than the liberty of the press."

And other general arguments in support of the measure, he adverted to the special grounds on which he had based it, and spoke feelingly of his old friend John Adam:

"In addition to the motives which must have existed, on general principles, for giving the fullest freedom, there were circumstances in the state of the press in India which rendered the measure now proposed almost unavoidable. The press had been practically free for many years, including the whole period of the administration of the late Governor-General, Lord William Bentinck; and although laws of restriction existed in Bengal which gave awful power to the Government, they had ceased to operate for any practical purpose. They were extremely odious. They gave to the Government arbitrary power, which British subjects in any part of the world detest. No Government could now have carried them into effect, without setting universal opinion at defiance. After the liberty given by Lord William Bentinck's forbearance, no Government could have ventured to enforce those laws unless it had been gifted with a most hardy insensibility to ridicule and

obloquy. Even supposing them to be good, they were utterly useless; and as they brought unnecessary odium on the Government, it would have been absurd longer to retain them.

"In speaking of those laws, I cannot refrain from adverting to the individual who, having been at the head of the Government when they were passed, bears all the blame of being their author. He was one of the best, and purest, and most benevolent men that ever lived. In proposing those laws he must have been actuated, as he always was, by the most upright and conscientious motives. Had he been now alive, and at the head of this Government, he would probably have been among the foremost to propose the abolition of those laws which he formerly thought necessary, but would now have seen to be useless and odious. To what a degree popular feeling prevails against them cannot be more strikingly shown than by the detraction which they have brought on the memory of one who was eminently deserving of all praise, distinguished by great talents and the most important public services, the soul of honour and virtue, admired, beloved, revered by all who knew him, but condemned by the public, who knew him not, solely on account of these laws which they abhor."

In conclusion, after some words of caution, he spoke of himself and of the expected arrival of Lord Heytesbury:

"I am sensible of your kindness in the wish that you have expressed that I may remain in my present office long enough to take a part in passing the proposed measure into a law. For two reasons I entertain the same wish. I am naturally desirous of having a share in the completion of a law which will, I trust, conduce to the welfare of India and mankind. I am also anxious to relieve the Governor-General elect from the responsibility of a measure regarding which long experience in India enables me to proceed without hesitation. On the other hand, there is a consideration which will more than reconcile me to the transfer of this duty to the hands of the distinguished nobleman appointed to this office. Fully believing that all the prepossessions of a British statesman, and especially of one who has witnessed the inferiority of countries where the press is enslaved, compared with his own, where it is free, must be in favour of the liberty of the press, I shall rejoice at his having an opportunity of commencing his administration with an act which will at once establish good understanding and a cordial feeling between the head

of the Government and the community over which he is to preside."*

That this reply, printed as it was in every journal in India, and speedily transmitted to England, should have called forth much commentary in both countries, was only what was to be expected. In the former it was received with almost universal applause. To a community accustomed to be addressed by their rulers only in the frigid, pompous language of official reserve, there was something refreshing and exhilarating in the heartiness —almost the familiarity with which Sir Charles Metcalfe thus addressed himself to them. It was a bit of plain-speaking, all the more appreciable for its rarity. But there were other considerations which commended it to men who pondered over its weighty and significant sentences, and dwelt lovingly on the great truths it contained. Amongst others who expressed their admiration of the manifesto, was Daniel Wilson, Bishop of Calcutta—a man on whose many lustrous deeds and beautiful traits of character the historian of Christianity centuries hence will dwell with delighted enthusiasm—who read the address lovingly and hopefully, and then sat down to indite the following characteristic letter:—

"*Wednesday*, 8 A.M.

"DEAR SIR CHARLES,—I trust you will let me say to you what I should have said to Lord William had it been from his pen, how delighted I am at your reply on the subject of the press. The acknowledgment of Almighty God—the conception of the true ends for which we are entrusted with the empire of India—the importance attached to the diffusion of knowledge—the cautions insinuated against the abuse of the freedom of the press—the defence of Mr. Adam, and the preparation for Lord Heytesbury—are all, to my mind, admirable.

"Forgive my presumption. You imagine me a rank Tory—but

* The document from which these passages are taken is given entire in the Appendix.

I love truth, improvement, efficiency, honour, from the bottom of my heart.

"I think I should work under you well, if you would but continue Governor-General.

"I would not have you, as a Government, say a word more than your reply does upon Christianity, involved as it is inseparably in the European knowledge, civilization, and improvement which you so justly extol and put forward.

"Christianity is the affair of the ministers of religion, under the general eye of the Civil Government, and sustained, as it developes its benefits, by due countenance, &c.

"But I check my rashness again, and in the only effectual way, when on such a subject, by closing my note.

"I am, dear Sir Charles,

"Yours most truly,

"D. CALCUTTA.

"P.S.—There is a first-rate speech of Mr. Grant in the *Englishman*."

While such was the language of one of the ablest and best of men whom England has ever sent forth to toil beneath an Eastern sky, this great measure for the liberation of the Indian Press found at home many assailants. It has now lived down the reproaches which were once cast upon it, and I should no more think of writing an elaborate treatise in its defence than of defending the freedom of commerce, or the free admission of Europeans to all parts of India, or any other of those fair images of progressive civilization, which have pushed down from their pedestals the old idols of monopoly and exclusiveness, a blind worship of which was once considered necessary to the maintenance of our empire in the East. What I would say, principally relates to the motives and the conduct of Sir Charles Metcalfe, which were greatly misrepresented at the time; and I hope, therefore, misunderstood.

It was said that although in 1835 he spoke grandiloquently of the blessings of a free press, he had not always

been of that opinion—that the doctrines which he then enunciated were newly taken up for a special purpose; that he seized the opportunity of a brief occupancy of the chief seat of Government to secure for himself a little fleeting popularity. I have shown that what his opinions were in 1835, they had been ten years before—that what he said in 1825 he would do, he did ten years afterwards—that the performance, indeed, exactly coincided with the promise. I can trace only the most undeviating consistency throughout the ten years of which I speak.

It has been said, however, that the arbitrary measures of John Adam were applauded and supported by him; and those measures are of a date two years antecedent to the period from which I have traced Metcalfe's declared opinions. But there is on record a specific declaration of what his real sentiments were regarding the measures of his friend. The following letter addressed to the late Dr. Marshman, which was called forth by some comments he had published on a paper in the *Asiatic Journal*, leaves nothing to be said on the subject.*

SIR C. METCALFE TO DR. MARSHMAN.

"*Agra, August* 22, 1836.

"My dear Dr. Marshman.—I am sincerely obliged to you for taking up the cudgels for me against a writer in the *Asiatic Journal*, whose attack, by-the-by, I was not aware of; but on what authority do you say 'Granted,' to an assertion that I was one of the loudest in applauding the ejection of Mr. Buckingham—or something to that effect—which is meant to fix on me a charge of inconsistency? I do not recollect anything that can justify either the assertion or your admission of it. Everything that John Adam ever did, was from noble motives; and in ejecting Mr.

* I am indebted for this letter, and for much information besides, to my friend Mr. J. C. Marshman, to the appearance of whose promised life of his venerable father, I, in common with many others, have been looking forward with the deepest interest.

Buckingham he displayed the firmness and boldness, in acting up to his principles, which are the characteristics of an honest and upright mind. *That* I admired, and still admire as much as ever; but if I have any recollection of my opinions as to the measure, I thought then, as I now think, that it was very ill-judged. I was always of opinion that it was unworthy of the Government to enter into contests with the press; and if I had had my will it would not have been left for me to legalise the liberty of the press. I was sorry to see you 'grant' an assertion which I believe to be groundless, unless my cordial admiration of John Adams's character can be construed into an approval of measures against the press, from which I should at the time have dissented, if I had been in the way to offer any sentiments, unless I have really forgotten my opinions at that time, which I cannot suppose to be possible. So bold an assertion staggers me (and seems to have captured you), otherwise I should speak with more positiveness on the subject. But what was your authority for saying 'Granted?'

"Yours very sincerely,

"C. T. METCALFE."

Again, it has been said that, however sound Metcalfe's theories may have been, and however benevolent his desires, he was not justified in doing that which might cause great practical inconvenience and embarrass future governments, without the consent of the authorities at home—that looking from the people's side he may have been right, but that from the Government's side he was wrong. But the fact is, that no small number of those who advocated most zealously the liberation of the Indian press, looked at the question from the Government side, and regarded the press as an auxiliary to the efficient administration of our Indian Empire, such as no other agency could supply. Rightly understood, they contended, the Indian press was a formidable instrument, ever at the command of a sagacious ruler. What was called the "licentiousness" of the Indian press was, perhaps, the characteristic which of all others, in a Government point of view, constituted its chief utility. The Indian press was said to be a "licentious" press, because it sometimes

attacked the measures of Government as a body, and sometimes the acts or characters of individual servants of the Government. In the former case, as I have already shown, it was a great safety-valve. Discontent exhausted itself in big words; and the flower, safety, was plucked from the nettle, danger. In the other case, it had all the advantages of a vast system of espionage without any of the odium that attached to the direct employment of spies. The editor's box, under a free press, was sure to become a general depository for all complaints against inefficient or unprincipled Government servants. A man, who had a charge to bring against an official functionary for abusing his power, or neglecting his duty, might now slip it into the editor's box, as a Venetian would into the Lion's Mouth, and so make his complaint known to the rulers of the land. These charges might not be true. They might be based upon a misconception, or contain a wilful exaggeration of the truth. But if "Expositor," or "Detector," or a "Hater of Oppression," complained that the myrmidons of the collector in a certain district were torturing the natives, or the judge of a certain court was habitually keeping his suitors waiting, whilst he was hunting, or shooting, or playing with his children, and it were found upon inquiry that no ryots had been tortured, and no suitors kept waiting; although such untruths might be unpalatable to the object of them and bring discredit on the journal in which they appeared, no injury, at least, was inflicted on the Government. Or if it were asserted, in a letter from the Mofussil, signed "An Indigo Planter," or "True Blue," that the interests of thousands in some obscure locality were entrusted to a functionary imbecile from old age, incapacitated by disease, or enfeebled by evil habits, and it were found that the incumbent was young, healthy, and discreet, no very great harm ensued to any but the editor or the proprietor.

of the paper in which the falsehood appeared. But if, on the other hand, these statements were true (and they were far more likely to be true than false), it was placed in the power of Government to remedy the evil, without their incurring any odium by detecting it. Thus a free press in India was calculated to strengthen the hands of Government, by giving them a power of supervision and control over their servants which nothing else could supply. And that it has abundantly performed this important function; that it has exposed much evil, that it has led the way to much good, and altogether contributed largely to the successful administration of the last twenty years, is a fact which nothing but the most inveterate prejudice will urge a man to deny. The Government has never been so strong; the servants of Government have never been so efficient; the relations between all estates and all classes have never been so harmonious; there has never been more order and tranquillity in the country, more peace and good-will among men, than during the years which have elapsed since Charles Metcalfe liberated the Indian press.*

The new press regulations, though the draft of them was published in the spring, did not come into operation until the autumn. The freedom of the Indian press dates from the 15th of September, 1835. It was a great day, which the people of Calcutta were eager to celebrate. So they subscribed together, and they erected a noble building on the banks of the Hooghly, to contain a public library, and to be applied to other enlightening purposes, and

* This was written in 1854. In spite of the temporary restrictions imposed upon the press in 1857, and of the lamentable events which were supposed to necessitate them, I leave the passage without alteration. I believe that the statements in the text will soon again be as applicable to the existing state of things, as it was when the passage was written. (*January* 1858.)

they called it the Metcalfe Hall. It was to bear an inscription declaring that the press of India was liberated on the 15th of September, 1835, by Sir Charles Metcalfe; and the bust of the Liberator was to be enclosed in the building.

But whilst the community of Calcutta were striving to perpetuate the memory of this great act, the Home authorities were thinking of annulling the act itself. They did not perceive, at that time, how instrumental a free press might be in working out the great objects which they had at heart. They saw only dangers which did not exist. But when Lord Auckland came out to India, he marvelled greatly at their alarm; and wisely discouraged the backward movement which the Home Government would perhaps have made, if a less liberal statesman had chanced to be at the head of affairs.*

* "The good people of England," wrote Lord Auckland to Metcalfe, in June, 1836, "have taken strangely to heart the establishment of a free press in India. There has been a disposition to reject the act by which it has been effected. The end, however, of their deliberations on the subject has been an angry despatch condemning the measure, and calling the Council to consider the propriety of its repeal. I am exceedingly surprised at the manner in which this measure has been received both by the Court and Board. It had never occurred to me to think of it as one of danger and innovation until I heard of the alarm that had been raised. Upon all observation, I am well satisfied that, without effecting any substantial change, it rests upon a good principle, and has removed a cause of irritation, and the tenor, therefore, of our answer to the Court cannot be doubted." What effect the displeasure of the Company had on Metcalfe himself, will be shown in a subsequent chapter.

CHAPTER VI.

[1836—1837.]

LAST DAYS IN INDIA.

Revocation of Lord Heytesbury's Appointment—Lord Auckland Governor-General—Abolition of the Agra Presidency—Metcalfe's Doubts and Uncertainties—Investiture of the Bath—Acceptance of the Lieutenant-Governorship—Departure for Agra—Administration of the North-Western Provinces.

Whilst Sir Charles Metcalfe, under the impression that he would be succeeded by a Tory Governor-General, was giving effect to the great measure to which the preceding chapter has been devoted, a Whig Governor-General was making his arrangements for the voyage to Calcutta. The Government of Sir Robert Peel was doomed to perish in its infancy. It had scarcely met the new Parliament when it was demonstrated, in the most unmistakeable manner, that his Majesty's Ministers had not the confidence of the country. Sir Robert Peel and his colleagues, therefore, resigned; and the old Whig cabinet, with some slight modifications, was reconstructed under the auspices of Lord Melbourne. Mr. Grant, now created Lord Glenelg, went to the Colonial Office, and Sir John Hobhouse became President of the Board of Control.

One of the first acts of the new Ministry was to revoke Lord Heytesbury's appointment. He had received the usual valedictory entertainment from the East India Company; he had drawn the outfit allowance granted to every new Governor-General; he had made every

preparation for his voyage to India by the *Jupiter*—but he had not sailed. The Whigs were just in time to arrest his departure. They determined that Lord Heytesbury should not be Governor-General. They had full confidence in the man who held the reins of Government, and although they would not abandon what they called their principles, by appointing a Company's servant permanently to the vice-regal office, they were wonderfully consoled by the idea that the public interests were not likely to suffer by any delay that might occur in the appointment of a Whig nobleman to that honourable and lucrative post.

To Metcalfe these changes were only of importance so far as they unsettled and held him in a continual state of incertitude. "We are in expectation," he wrote to Mr. Tucker, "of hearing soon of the nomination of Lord Glenelg, or Lord Auckland, or some other lord as Governor-General, and of the abolition of the Agra Government. I may, therefore, soon follow this letter. My prospect is very comfortable; for whatever may happen to me, I shall be happy, grateful, and content. When the worst is a return to England to enjoy independence and retirement, good is the worst."

In another letter he wrote more fully, still to the same correspondent, regarding his future prospects; and in reply to some remarks of Mr. Tucker, on the landed revenue of the North-Western Provinces, spoke of his own views regarding that and other matters connected with the financial condition of the country:

"I had made up my mind to go home, when the Agra Bill seemed so rapidly to approach completion, but am thrown into uncertainty again by the uncertain fate which now awaits it. I expected to be relieved from my temporary charge here by Lord Heytesbury two months ago, and now I look forward to resign it it to some one else, two or three months hence. We speculate on Lord Glenelg or Lord Auckland: but as no one thought of Lord Heytesbury before his actual appointment, so we may have a

stranger whom no one thinks of now, or Lord Heytesbury again, in the event of another change in the Ministry. Whoever it may be, my best assistance shall be at his command, if I can render any. My views remain as before. I have no wish to throw up service if I hold an office which will not discredit me; but am quite willing to go if I experience a loss of confidence, or have only the option of remaining in an inferior appointment compared with what I have filled, as would have been the case in the Lieutenant-Governorship appointed by the Government in India, which I could not, I think, have held with credit, after being member of Supreme Council, Governor, and temporary Governor-General, although the duties would have been as interesting and important as those of Governor.

"As Governor of Agra, I wrote a letter recommending permission for permanent settlements to be given, for eventual use, at the discretion of the Governor, on occasions which might justify it. I think that they might be beneficially introduced into the Western Provinces in many instances. The idea has met with some opposition; but the letter has gone for your consideration. I trust that the apparent decay of our land revenue was only temporary, and owing to temporary causes. I have been trying of late to find out our real financial condition, which does not appear in the accounts, from the manner in which they are prepared. The result shows in the present year, on estimate, a surplus in India of above three crore and twenty lakhs to meet home expenditure; but this is in part composed of an estimated increase of land revenue in Bengal and Agra of about seventy-five lakhs, besides an increase of other branches, which, if not all realised, will affect the result. The prospect, however, is better than it was, when it appeared from the accounts that our Indian surplus was only a crore, or a crore and twenty-seven lakhs. This appearance induced us to address the Court, proposing strong measures of retrenchment, which will not be so urgently required, if the information now elicited from the accountant-general's office prove correct. Nothing would rejoice me more than to see that we had really an income equal to all our charges, at home as well as in India. After that I should have great hopes of prosperity; but to go on borrowing in time of peace is a very disheartening business."—[*October* 4, 1835.]

It was not until the close of the year that tidings of the nomination of Lord Auckland to the Governor-Generalship

reached Metcalfe in Calcutta. Of that nobleman he knew little, except that they had been schoolfellows at Eton; but the circumstance, trifling as it was, tended to increase his kindly feelings towards his successor. Whether he would remain in the country to aid the new Governor-General was still an open question. Much depended upon the manner in which the new Agra Bill, then before Parliament, would be shaped. To Metcalfe himself, as he continued to write to Mr. Tucker, the issue was of little consequence, as regarded his future happiness:

"I am looking out," he said, "for the arrival of Lord Auckland, which may, I conclude, be soon expected, and am quite uncertain as to my own movements. I have been watching the Agra Bill, but cannot trace it beyond the second reading. The Agra Government abolished, and nothing else done, my course would be clear enough; but if the Governor-General arrive without sentence having been passed against the Agra Government, but with the verdict still hanging over it, I shall be puzzled; as I shall neither like to abandon the Government to which I have been appointed, nor be quite satisfied in resuming it, with so near a prospect of its dissolution. There is no use, however, in troubling you with my uncertainties. I must determine for myself, when the time comes, as may seem to be most according to duty. If I go home, I shall, I trust, find you in the enjoyment of health, and the same energy of character which you so have so conspicuously displayed in upholding the honour of the Court of Directors, in the extraordinary period during which you were their leader—not, I trust, for the only time. I shall not be surprised, but should think it most natural, if this letter found you again in one of the chairs; and my anxiety for the good government of India makes me wish that it may be so."—[*December* 27, 1835.]

". . . . I am, as you may suppose, in daily expectation of Lord Auckland's arrival; but we do not yet know when he actually sailed. My movements will be determined by the character of the position in which I may find myself, after delivering over the Supreme Government. The limit that I have ever fixed for my public service in India is the point at which I cannot continue to serve without a sense of descending from a

higher position to a lower. The descent from the Governor-Generalship I do not regard in that light, because it was avowedly a temporary and provisional appointment, in which I had no expectation of being confirmed. The position below which I should think it some degradation to descend, is that which I occupied before I became Governor-General—that is, the Governor of a Presidency, with the provisional appointment of Governor-General annexed. The latter made me the second man in India, a position in which I should be glad to remain. But any inferior to that would, I think, be something like degradation. Thus, if the Governorship of Agra be reduced to a Lieutenancy, in the nomination of the Governor-General, I cannot, I conceive, remain in that situation. If the Governorship be retained without the provisional Governor-Generalship, I shall be puzzled, from reluctance to abandon the Government spontaneously, and a counterbalancing reluctance to resume it with a sense of occupying an inferior position to what I before held in the time of two preceding Governor-Generals, Lord W. Bentinck and Lord Heytesbury. If the Government of Agra be continued, and the provisional Governor-Generalship be added, I shall certainly remain. You now know my intentions as clearly as I can convey them. Nothing but a sense of degradation will drive me from the public service, as long as I have health and faculties remaining; but that feeling may be produced by anything short of what I have before been. I should have considered the question of the Agra Government as settled by Lord Ellenborough's Bill, but I cannot trace the Bill beyond the second reading; and a letter from the Court of the 12th of August speculates, in a financial statement, on the possibility of the continuance of the fourth Presidency on the same footing with the others. The greater probability, however, is, that it is abolished, and that I shall soon follow this letter. No man in a state of uncertainty could be happier than I am; for either way I shall be satisfied. In going to England I shall be perfectly so—happy in the prospect of retirement before me, and thankful for the favours and distinctions that I have received. I may, therefore, shortly after you receive this letter, have the pleasure of shaking you by the hand, and expressing to you personally how much I feel obliged to you for all your kindness."—[*January* 24, 1836.]

And now it became to Metcalfe a subject of earnest consideration whether he should remain in India after the

arrival of Lord Auckland, or yield to the desire of his own heart and return to his native country. He was prepared to stifle his own inclination and continue to serve the State, if he could do so without any manifest official degradation. But the tidings which came from home of the progress of the new Agra Bill, by which the some-time Presidency was to be reduced to a Lieutenant-Governorship with very limited power and pomp attached to it, made him doubtful of the propriety of accepting an office in which he would occupy a position apparently lower than that to which he had previously attained. In the midst of the doubts and perplexities suggested by these considerations, there came to him very gratifying letters from England—letters which assured him of the high estimation in which he was held both by the Court of Directors and the Crown Ministers—letters which urged him to remain in India at the head of the Agra Government in spite of the mutilation it had undergone. As a proof of the respect in which he was held by the King and his Ministers, it was intimated that his Majesty intended to bestow upon him an especial mark of his royal favour. He would, doubtless, have been created a baronet; but he was a baronet already. So the King intimated his intention of conferring on him the Grand Cross of the Bath.* Lord Auckland was to carry out the insignia with him, and the investiture was to take place after his arrival.† Still Met-

* The manner in which the intimation was conveyed must have been very gratifying to Metcalfe. Sir Herbert Taylor, by the King's command, informed the Court that "his Majesty has felt great satisfaction in thus manifesting his sense of the meritorious and valuable services of so highly respectable and distinguished an individual."

† Lord Auckland wrote from the Admiralty on the 13th of November, to announce the commission with which he had been charged, adding, "I shall probably have it in my power within a very few days after your receipt of this letter, to make your

calfe could not bring himself to think that in justice to himself he could accept such an appointment as the Lieutenant-Governorship of Agra, and on the 7th of February, 1836, he wrote to Mr. Tucker:—

"Many thanks for your kind letter with the Agra Bill. It is the only copy as yet received here. As you surmise, I do not see how I can stay in this altered and subordinate condition of my *ci-devant* Government. I shall, therefore, be prepared, if nothing, at present unknown to me, should occur to change my mind, to embark for England after delivering over charge of the Supreme Government to Lord Auckland, whose arrival we daily expect. I had no wish to retire from the public service, and should not have done so if I had retained the same position that I held during the latter part of Lord William Bentinck's Government, and after the appointment of Lord Heytesbury, but I do not like tumbling down hill. I shall retire thankful and grateful for all the favours and distinctions that I have received from the Court of Directors and his Majesty's Ministers. I have intelligence of the honour of the Grand Cross, for which—although you may not have had any immediate share in conferring it—I hold myself in great measure indebted to you, on account of the manner in which you brought my name into notice in the struggle regarding the Governor-Generalship."

But scarcely had Metcalfe despatched this letter, when other encouraging communications came to him from his friends at the India House. The chairman, Mr. Stanley Clarke, wrote to him, on the 26th of September, that on the preceding day he had been unanimously appointed, for a third time, Provisional Governor-General, on the death, resignation, or coming away of Lord Auckland:—

"Hence," he added, "I am led to hope; and I may say it is the unanimous hope of the Court of Directors, as well as that of our

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acquaintance; and I can assure you that I am anxious to do so, and that I look forward with hope and with confidence to the advantage which, in undertaking the Government of India, I shall derive from your assistance."

new Governor-General, that you may be disposed, on the same high and patriotic grounds which it is well known govern all your movements, to accept the office which will be tendered, in its reduced character, to your consideration; and that the East India Company may be thus secure of your highly valuable services both at Agra, and (should the contingency happen) eventually at the head of the Supreme Government."

On the same day, Metcalfe's old friend and preceptor, Mr. Edmonstone—then an honoured member of the Court of Directors—addressed to him a long and interesting letter, pleading in the same strain:—

"Our earnest and anxious hope," he wrote, "now is that notwithstanding the legislative alteration which has taken place with respect to Agra (founded mainly, by the way, on your own representations), you may still be disposed to afford the important benefit of your continued services by taking upon you the office of Lieutenant-Governor, which Lord Auckland will propose to your acceptance, conjoined as it will be with the renewal of your provisional succession to the office of Governor-General. It is, no doubt, a subordinate appointment; but in your hands it will be subordinate only in name; as we are well assured that Lord Auckland, far from being inclined to exercise the control which Lord William deemed indispensable, will be too happy to be himself guided by your superior knowledge and advice, and leave to you the full and uncontrolled authority, not only in that but in every other department of your administration.* I cannot conclude this letter without expressing the pleasure with which I contemplate the honours and distinctions so justly conferred upon you. It is a singular and gratifying incident of my life to have seen three valued friends, with whom I was officially associated from the very commencement of their career, successively elevated to the highest offices of the State, yourself, poor Adam, and my now colleague, Bayley."

The same ship which brought these letters, brought also the new Governor-General to Calcutta. The arrival

* The chairman wrote to the same effect: "The Governor-General will be most desirous to have the benefit of your services, and is quite prepared, under the new form, to assign large political powers into your hands."

of Lord Auckland had been looked for in the course of February, and the month had barely worn to a close before the *Jupiter* frigate entered the Hooghly river. Metcalfe had despatched letters of welcome to meet his successor at the Sand-heads, and on the 2nd of March Lord Auckland wrote to thank him for his kind offices. "I thankfully accept," he wrote, "the arrangements which you are good enough to propose for my reception in Calcutta (I hope) to-morrow. It will then give me real pleasure to renew an acquaintance which has now been interrupted for at least thirty-five years; and I look forward with pleasure and earnestness to the advantage of that advice which you so cordially tender—though even with this, I cannot but feel how difficult it will be for me to supply the vacancy which you are about to make."

If anything had been wanting to give full effect to the charmings of Clarke and Edmonstone, it would have been found in the demeanour of the new Governor-General. Metcalfe soon found that all that had been said about Lord Auckland by his friends at the India House was unadornedly true. He saw at once in his successor a man of unaffected modesty, eager to profit by the experience of those who had earned by long service in the country a right to give him advice. And in a little time it became apparent that the new Governor-General was a man very earnest in his desire to do good; very honest in his intentions; very assiduous in his application to business; and of a very remarkable aptitude for the rapid acquisition of facts. A few hours sufficed to establish relations of confidence and intimacy between them. And Metcalfe soon felt that it would be difficult to find a colleague with whom he was more likely to co-operate with that cordiality which is at once so delightful to the individual and so beneficial to the State.

His resolution to return to England was, indeed, rapidly

giving way under the pressure of the repeated assaults which had been made upon it. But before it became necessary to deliver a final decision, the business of the investiture of the Grand Cross was to be performed. There was to be a grand ceremonial at Government House. The 14th of March was the day fixed for the show. The Garter-King-at-Arms had sent out something of a programme of the ceremony as it had been performed on the occasion of the investiture of Sir George Barlow; and now Mr. Colvin, the Governor-General's Private Secretary, was instructed to make all the necessary arrangements. In the meanwhile, Lord Auckland wrote to Sir Charles Metcalfe to forewarn him of what he intended to say on presenting the insignia to him. There is such a pleasant flavour about the letter, that I am irresistibly tempted to insert it:—

"LORD AUCKLAND TO SIR CHARLES METCALFE.

"My dear Sir,—I have written to Mr. Fagan,* and have real pleasure in giving the appointment to one who has so much merit.

"Mr. Colvin tells me that he has put you fully in possession of the course of proceeding for to-morrow. When I was spoken at, by the Chairman of the East India Company, and had to speak in return, he gave me beforehand the heads of the topics upon which he proposed to touch, and I found it convenient in framing a reply. I have been thinking of what I shall say to you to-morrow; and in the same manner you may like to know that I shall begin by stating the commands of the Secretary of State, then the personal commands and kind expressions of the King, my own pleasure in obeying them, in very general terms your career in India, an assertion that opinion in England is not indifferent to

* When filling up the appointments on his personal staff, Lord Auckland, as a compliment to his predecessor, had invited him to name an officer for the situation of aide-de-camp: and Sir Charles Metcalfe had recommended Lieutenant C. G. Fagan.

merit in India, and congratulations and good wishes As far as I can guess, I may be five, but I shall not be ten minutes.

"There is a mystery in wearing the ribbon, with which you may like to be acquainted. In full dress, and upon state occasions, it is worn *over* the coat, and so I shall put it upon you and wear it myself in the morning to-morrow. Upon less awful and general occasions, it is worn under the coat, and so I propose wearing it at the ball in the evening—always over the right shoulder.

"I hope that I shall be in a condition to talk to you on the subject of Agra on Wednesday or Thursday next.

"Most truly, dear sir, yours,

"AUCKLAND."

On the following day the ceremony was duly performed. The principal actors in it have now all passed away. But there are some remaining spectators who remember all the incidents of the imposing scene as though it were but yesterday. From an early hour there had been an uncommon bustle in Calcutta. Bands playing, guns firing, troops in motion, the body-guard plunging about, and the officers of the Governor-General's staff in a continual state of activity, declared to the astonished inhabitants of the city that some great *tomasha* was going on. But whether it were in honour of the new lord or the old was an enigma to the wondering natives. Sir Charles Metcalfe, leaving his house at Garden-Reach, had been met by a deputation from Government House and conducted to that stately edifice, where a guard of honour was drawn up to receive him, and a street of soldiers lined the way from the outer gates to the foot of the staircase by which he was to ascend. In the grand saloon of the great palace there was a goodly assemblage of all the most distinguished denizens of Calcutta. No special invitations had been issued. It was a public occasion, and the public came freely to do honour to the man. The Governor-General sat on a chair of state at the end of the saloon, and rose as Metcalfe advanced, supported on one side by the commanding

figure of Sir Henry Fane,* and on the other by Sir Jeremiah Dickson. Then, holding the patent open in his hands, Lord Auckland commenced the inaugural address.† He spoke slowly and distinctly, and his words were listened to with profound attention. After stating the commands he had received from the King, and the pleasure which it had given him to be the bearer of such tokens of his Majesty's esteem and respect, and briefly alluding to Metcalfe's thirty-five years of honoured service, Lord Auckland proceeded to say:—

"Throughout this long period you have followed the dictates of a disposition benevolent, liberal, and kind; you have exerted all the energies and all the ability of a manly and powerful mind, and indefatigably and without remission at once sustained the strength and confirmed the security of British India, and promoted the welfare of every class of its inhabitants; and you have proved how possible it is at once to support the power and the dignity of the British name, and to be the friend of peace, the friend of human improvement and of human happiness.

"I have been commanded, sir, to conduct this ceremony in the manner most likely to do you honour. I invited no one to assist at it; but I opened my doors, and these ample halls are filled with those who honour and regard you. That such should be the feeling of those who have lived with you, who have known you, who have watched your progress or have lived under your rule,

* With the exception of the Governor-General, Sir Henry Fane was the only Grand Cross present on the occasion. Sir Henry had written to Metcalfe to say that he considered the admission of such a man to the honours of the Bath conferred distinction on the order, and that soldiers would never complain of the participation of civilians in such honours if they were always as worthily bestowed.

† Just as Lord Auckland was about to commence his address there was some little interruption, I am told, occasioned by the difficulty of controlling the prattle of some English children who were present. For this, however, the fertile mind of Mr. Macaulay suggested a remedy. He checked their exuberance by telling them that it was as wicked to talk there as in church.

must of itself be gratifying to you; and it must be gratifying also to all present to know that public character in India is well appreciated, and that by all, up to him who sits upon the throne and is the fountain of honour amongst Englishmen, your name is upheld and inseparably connected with the history of this country, to which so large a portion of your life, your affections, and your best exertions have been devoted.

"More than this, sir, I need not say. I beg you to accept my congratulations, and the expression of a wish as warm as it is sincere, that you may wear for many years in health and in happiness this mark of distinction. For myself, I can have no better object than that of endeavouring to emulate your example —no higher ambition than that, when I am called upon to leave the station which you have so lately quitted, I may be followed with a share of that general respect and general regard which are the just meed of your public and private virtues."

A general burst of applause followed the termination of this address. The red ribbon was then placed over the shoulder of Sir Charles Metcalfe, and the star fixed on his breast. When he commenced his reply he spoke slowly, and seemingly from the full heart; but there were those present who were peculiarly struck by the beautiful mellowness of voice which his emotion in no wise impaired. "My Lord," he said, as the people pressed round to catch every word that fell from him:—

"My Lord,—I cannot find words to express my deep sense of his Majesty's gracious goodness in conferring on me this eminent mark of his royal favour, or his princely condescension in adding such tokens of personal interest and notice. It would be highly presumptuous in me to imagine myself deserving of so great an honour, but it would be equally so to question his Majesty's judgment, by dwelling on my own unworthiness. I shall, therefore, only say that my heart is devoted to my king and country, and that it shall be my study throughout life that I may not disgrace this most honourable order of the defenders of the State into which I have been admitted, and that the service of which it is my pride to be a member, and to whose merits more than to any desert on my own part I owe this high distinction, may never have reason to be ashamed of their representative. This unex-

pected Honour will, I trust, be an additional inducement to me to strive to merit the esteem of my fellow-creatures, and to perform my duties to God and man on all occasions to the utmost of my ability.

"To your lordship I am quite at a loss for the means of conveying in adequate language my grateful thanks for the distinguished manner in which you have executed his Majesty's commands, and for the generous sentiments which you have been pleased to express. I fear that you greatly overrate my humble services and pretensions. Permit me to express my cordial wishes for the success of your lordship's Government, and my fervent hope that the beneficent measures which may be expected from your administration will promote the prosperity and happiness of the people of India, and tend to bind this vast portion of the British Empire in ties of sympathy and affection with the United Kingdom. That such may be the result I most ardently pray, and the manifest omens which encourage this hope are a just cause for universal congratulation."

The guns, on the saluting battery of Fort William, announced the completion of the ceremony, and the day was ended with a complimentary festival at Government House.

The time had now come for Metcalfe finally to decide whether he would accept the Lieutenant-Governorship of the North-Western Provinces; or rather to give the official imprimatur to the intention already formed in his mind. Some little reluctance to accept the office still clung to him, for he was unwilling to oppose such an obstacle to the advancement of his friend and colleague Mr. Blunt; but with such cordiality and sincerity did that gentleman urge his acceptance of the Government—expressing an earnest hope that, "for the interests not of the Western Provinces only, but of India generally," Metcalfe might be induced to remain in the country, that all scruples were dissipated, and the final resolution taken.

The question had been orally discussed between Lord Auckland and Sir Charles Metcalfe; and it had been

agreed that the Governor-General should state the whole case in a letter, and that a written answer should be returned. "I promised you a letter to-day," wrote Lord Auckland, on the 17th of March, "and I send you the rough sketch of one, which I have not time to revise or to copy; but it contains my views on the subjects discussed in it; and it is better that I should send it to you so than that I should break my engagement." The letter, indeed, scarcely needed revision. I give it as it was written. It contains so full an exposition of the circumstances attending the establishment of the Lieutenant-Governorship of the North-Western Provinces, that nothing more need be added to render them intelligible to the reader:—

LORD AUCKLAND TO SIR CHARLES METCALFE.

"*Government House, March* 17, 1836.

"MY DEAR SIR CHARLES,—I have given my best consideration to the question which I have to decide, upon the appointment of a Lieutenant-Governor to Agra, and am anxious to lay before you the following statement of facts, and of the propositions which are founded upon them, in the hope of obtaining your concurrence, but perfectly certain that whether I do or not, I shall have the advantage of your advice and suggestions.

"The question is one of considerable difficulty, and probably if no step had yet been taken in it, I might have been disposed to leave it, at least for a time, at rest, and either have waited until the improvement of the public finances might have enabled me to form a more efficient and a more complete form of government for the North Western Provinces than it is now open to me to do, or to have satisfied myself by actual experience that no such change is necessary; but the change has, in fact, taken place; my own opinion leans very much to its advantage, and if this were doubtful, the steps which have been taken could hardly be retraced without considerable inconvenience.

"In endeavouring, with the assistance of Mr. Colvin, to hunt out the history of these transactions, I find that, as far back as 1808, a suggestion to the effect of establishing a high official authority in our North-Western Provinces was made by the two Commissioners, Mr. Cox and Mr. St. George Tucker. The

advantages contemplated were, in reference to political relations and improvement of local internal administration; and they point out the relief which would be afforded to the Government at Calcutta, to the impulse which would be given to the local authorities, and to the advantages which would accrue to the inhabitants of these provinces by an easy access to their rulers.

"The question was revived in 1829, and the division strongly recommended by the Finance Committee, Mr. Holt Mackenzie, Mr. David Hill, and Mr. Bax; and it is needless to detail their opinions, and those which were in consequence expressed by Lord William Bentinck, Sir Charles Metcalfe, Mr. Bayley, and others here, and by the Directors and the Commissioners of the India Board, and Members of Parliament in England—they all tend to admit that such a measure would add to the efficiency of administration; but very many of them adverted to the strong objections which may be raised on the ground of expense; and much difference of opinion prevailed upon the amount of patronage and of control over the most important of our political relations, which should be delegated to the newly-created office.

"Lord William Bentinck was more opposed than others to a separation of authority, though admitting the total inadequacy of the Government at Calcutta to control and superintend the North-Western Provinces. He would have removed the seat of the Supreme Government to those provinces, and have delegated local authorities to Calcutta.

"When the bill for the renewal of the Charter (of which the creation of a fourth presidency formed a part) was under discussion, the Court of Directors, in opposition to that part of it, admitted the necessity of an efficient Government in the northern provinces, but thought that every object might be most satisfactorily and most economically obtained by the appointment of a lieutenant-governor, subject to the Bengal Government—and arguments to this effect were urged by others—the act, nevertheless, was passed; and by instructions from the Court, of December 17, 1833, after considerable discussion in the Council, a Government of Agra was established, with full powers in all but the military and political departments, and with the patronage, under some exceptions and qualifications, of all civil situations. The residence of the Governor was fixed at Allahabad, with military power within the fort; and he had an establishment given to him little differing from that of other presidencies; but the Government of India kept the more important political relations

in their own hands, leaving the officers in other political situations to receive their orders from the governments within the sphere of whose jurisdictions they might be respectively situated. The Court of Delhi, the Sikh and Hill-protected States, the Bundlekund Rajahs, and chiefs depending upon the Saugor and Nerbudda agency, were given to Agra—with a reserve that it should at all times be competent to the Governor-General in Council to enlarge or modify these political powers.

"In the meantime, doubts of the propriety of keeping up this new presidency appears to have gained ground with the Court. It was remarked that the expense of a distinct presidency ought not to be incurred, except for some important end—that the duties proposed to be assigned were of a secondary kind; and it was proposed to appoint a Lieutenant-Governor for the purpose of relieving the Governor-General in Council from the management of such a mass of details as it was impossible for him to attend to without neglecting more important concerns.'

"The Board of Control took a more enlarged view of the subject, and considering the distance of the Upper Provinces from the seat of Government, their position in regard to foreign states, and the character of their population, observed, 'That they could not but concur in the opinion which had been given, that there should be stationed in these provinces an officer of authority paramount to that of commissioners, collectors, and magistrates, who, enjoying the full confidence of the Governor-General, might exercise whatever power it might from time to time be deemed expedient by the Governor-General to delegate to him.' Under an act introduced in consequence, and on the ground stated in the preamble, 'That much difficulty had arisen in carrying the enactment of the former act into effect, and that the same would be attended with a large increase of expense,' power is given to the Court to suspend the enactments regarding Agra, and to the Governor-General in Council to appoint a Lieutenant-Governor.

"The passing of this act was notified by the Court to the Government, the provisions of the former act suspended for three years, and a power was given, in case of the appointment of Sir Charles Metcalfe, to fix a salary equal to that of the Presidency of Madras or Bombay to the Lieutenant-Government.

"The summary of this statement is, that authority in general is in favour of the delegation of a portion of the power of the Supreme Government to a Lieutenant-Governor; that the extent of this delegation should be in some degree governed by circum-

stances and by existing difficulties; that the expense of the new establishment should not be on the scale of the other presidencies, though the officer should be one of high authority, and possessing the full confidence of the Governor-General, and 'Sir Charles Metcalfe' is pointed out as the person in whom all the qualifications for such an office are best united, and to whom the appointment may with most propriety be tendered.

"In all these points I entirely concur; and I am induced at once, and frankly, to submit the following proposition to you, premising that it is the result of my own first impression upon the subject, and open to discussion in Council; but I am so desirous to obtain your assistance to myself, and still more so the advantage to India of a continuance of the application of your abilities and exertions to its interests, that before I submit it to my colleagues I am anxious to learn from you your own views, and to endeavour to remove or to meet any objections which may occur to you. The proposition is, that you should accept the Lieutenant-Government of Agra. In case of your disposition to accept it, I should propose that the salary, the patronage, the superintendence of the judicial and revenue departments, should remain upon the footing on which they have been placed for Mr. Ross.*

"I should feel it necessary to propose that the establishment, in what regards its expensive appendages, should be much reduced.† And I think that the command of a fort and military authority may be dispensed with;‡ but I feel that, with you, with whom I could act upon terms of perfect concert and confidence, I should be glad to leave the conduct of some of our more difficult and important political relations; I should like your residence to be at Agra instead of Allahabad; and that all the intricate and important transactions which from time to time arise between our Government and the states of Gwalior and Rajpootana should be committed to you.§ To such an arrangement some difficulties

* "Perfectly satisfactory, if, as I presume, no change has taken place since I quitted the Council, and political relations hitherto attached be meant to be included."—C. T. M.

† "I have no objection to offer to any reduction of expense that may be deemed proper."—C. T. M.

‡ "The command of a fort is quite unnecessary."—C. T. M.

§ "This would be highly gratifying, and under these circumstances Agra would be decidedly preferable to Allahabad."—C. T. M.

would no doubt occur;* but they would not be greater than are incident to every such change; and it appears to be in accordance with the original, and with the best views with which the establishment of this authority was proposed. And as regards yourself, I should hope that such a situation, giving you a share in some of the most important duties of the Governor-General, acting in unison with him, and standing next in succession to him upon his commission, would not be liable to the objections which you have stated yourself to feel in discussing the probable nature of this new office.

"I need not say more at present. It is enough to give you the outline of the best plan which I can frame, and a discussion of it with you, if you should be at all disposed to entertain it, may lead to a removal of some of the difficulties and objections which may occur to the minds of us both.

"Most faithfully, &c., yours,

"AUCKLAND."

To this letter Sir Charles Metcalfe returned the following reply:—

SIR CHARLES METCALFE TO LORD AUCKLAND.

"*March* 18, 1836.

"MY DEAR LORD,—I have had the honour of receiving your obliging communication of yesterday.

"Before I proceed to reply to the propositions which it contains, permit me to express my grateful acknowledgments for the great consideration and kindness towards me which it evinces.

"Your lordship's offer of the Lieutenant-Governorship of Agra, or the Western Provinces, I am cordially prepared to accept, if it be established on the footing proposed.

"There is only one point on which I would solicit further consideration. It would seem that the political relations hitherto attached to the Agra Government are not included in the superintendence which it is intended to assign to the Lieutenant-Governor. These relations were originally attached to the Agra Government not only because the several states were in close connection with its borders, but also because the management of our relations with them was annexed to offices of territorial superintendence in the respective neighbourhoods. Thus the Commissioner at Delhi is also Agent at the Court of Delhi, and with the

* "I do not apprehend any difficulty."—C. T. M.

dependent Jageerdas in the vicinity. The officers, who are Political Agents in the Sikh and Hill-protected States, are also Territorial Superintendents. The Judge in Bundlekund is the Agent with the Bundlekund chiefs; and those connected with the Saugor and Nerbudda Agency are under the officer who is also Territorial Commissioner. If the political superintendence were separated from the territorial, new officers must be appointed to the former branch, or the same officers in their different capacities would be under different authorities. Without reference to my personal feelings, it appears to me that the most convenient public arrangement would be to leave these political relations as they now are in the hands of the same officers under the superintendence of the Lieutenant-Governor, subject to the control of the Governor-General in Council.

"With respect to my own feelings, everything that detracts from the extent and importance of the duties of the Lieutenant-Governor will be the more a cause of regret to me, as I undergo in some respects a considerable descent in passing from the office of Governor to that of Lieutenant. The only hesitation, then, I have felt as to my continuance in the public service, is founded on the feeling that there is some degradation in accepting any post inferior to that of Governor; and, although this impression is in a great degree removed from my own mind by the provisional appointment of Governor-General, and by the duties which your lordship proposes to assign to the Lieutenant-Governor, I am still sensible that such will be the general feeling, and the only way of guarding against it is to maintain as much as possible the respectability and character of the office. This consideration, I am aware, affects me alone, and I should not advance it in connection with any arrangement which I did not think on public grounds unobjectionable.

"What your lordship proposes regarding the powers to be exercised in the judicial and revenue departments is quite satisfactory.

"The annexation of the superintendence of our political relations with the states of Gwalior and Rajpootana will be highly gratifying to me; and the establishment of the Lieutenant-Governor's residence at Agra, instead of Allahabad, will, in that case, be decidedly advisable.

"I entertain no objection to any reduction of expense that may be deemed proper, and have no wish that any appendage should be retained on my account that can be dispensed with.

"The command of a fort I consider to be quite unnecessary and useless. It could not indeed be conferred consistently with the Commander-in-Chief's commission. The loss of the command of the fort at Allahabad, if the Lieutenant-Governor's residence were there, would, at first, be some degradation in the eyes of the community; but this will be obviated by fixing his residence at Agra.

"I have only further to suggest, that the rank and complimentary honours of the Lieutenant-Governor, within the sphere of his superintendence, be the same as those of the late Governor.

"C. T. METCALFE."

It was entirely in obedience to his sense of public duty that Sir Charles Metcalfe now put aside all his scruples and accepted the Lieutenant-Governorship of the North-Western Provinces. Little time was spent in making the necessary preparations. The beginning of April saw him ascending the river on his way to the seat of Government.* With what feelings he commenced his voyage may be gathered from the following letter to his aunt, in which he sets forth, very clearly and explicitly, the considerations which had induced him to forego his intention of returning to England:—

SIR CHARLES METCALFE TO THE HON. MRS. MONSON.

"On the Bhagurutteo Accommodation Boat, towed by a steamer, April 3, 1836.

"MY DEAREST AUNT,—I am on my way to the North-Western Provinces, as Lieutenant-Governor; and I must explain how this has come about. When the Agra Government was abolished, I concluded that I had nothing to do but to go home; and for some time before Lord Auckland's arrival, I was under the impression that such would be my destination; and very happy was I in that prospect. I afterwards, however, found that the Court of Directors and the Ministry had again appointed me Provisional Governor-General, which made me the second man in India; and

* The seat of Government had been fixed at Agra instead of Allahabad.

that the Court was anxious that I should remain as the Lieutenant-Governor of the North-Western Provinces. Lord Auckland, on his arrival, expressed very frankly and earnestly the same wish. I felt that it was my duty to meet their desires, if I could do so without discredit; and the question then was, whether the Lieutenant-Governorship could be made such an office as I could be expected to hold. This has been settled by assigning to it all the duties and powers that the Governor had, and adding others that he had not. Its duties are more extensive and more important than those of the former Government defunct. It is inferior only in designation, trappings, and allowances. These are not matters which I should think a sufficient reason for going, when I am desired to stay by those whose uniform kindness to me gives them a right to claim my services. I feel that I have no excuse for abandoning a post to which I am called by all parties concerned in the election; and in which I have greater opportunities of being useful to my country and to mankind than I could expect to find anywhere else. The decision, however, costs me much. I had been for some time indulging in pleasing visions of home; and the enjoyments of retirement and affectionate intercourse with relatives and friends. All these are now destroyed, and either annihilated for ever (for it seems to be my doom to live and die in India), or at least postponed for an indefinite period. I have done what I believe to be right, and that must be my consolation. . . . . God bless you all!

"Yours most affectionately,

"C. T. METCALFE."

When Sir Charles Metcalfe took his seat as Lieutenant-Governor of the North-Western Provinces, that once-troubled country was in a state of profound repose—repose, the result of those great measures which twenty years before he had advocated with so much zeal. This epoch of his career was, perhaps, of all others, the most uneventful. The annals of the country, however, cannot be described as that blank which is said to indicate so much national happiness. No Mahratta bands or Pindarree hordes called for suppression; but there were viewless enemies, perhaps, more terrible than either. It is the distinguishing circumstance of Metcalfe's

brief administration of the North-Western Provinces, that pestilence and famine rose up in his path. Before the close of 1836, there was a cry that the plague had reached India. In the close, uncleanly, narrow-streeted town of Pahli, in Rajpootana, a putrid fever, simulating the plague, was destroying the people. Presently, it appeared to spread from this centre of disease, and the alarm which it created extended even to Calcutta. At once Metcalfe determined to adopt stringent sanitary measures to arrest the progress of the pestilence—but in such a country as India, and in such a part of it as that in which the disease had broken out, the difficulty of enforcing them was extreme. Wise and vigorous as were his measures, and true as was the humanity that informed them, the exponents of native opinion were not slow to declare that they were unsuited to the country and to the people. They may have been unsuited to the inveterate prejudices of the people; but Metcalfe believed, in such a crisis, it was his duty to take a larger view of the question, and to save the people in spite of themselves.*

But great as was this calamity, it was brief and partial in its effects. A mightier evil was the drought, which parched up the North-Western Provinces, broke the staff of bread, and afflicted the people with famine. But a famine in India is an evil beyond the reach of human statesmanship to remedy, or greatly to alleviate. What, under such circumstances, could be done to mitigate the sufferings of the people, was done, as doubtless by any other Governor it would have been done; but still those

* See an abstract (from the *Bengal Hurkaru*), in the Appendix, of the Minute which Sir Charles Metcalfe published at the time; and the remarks of a native writer upon it.—[*Asiatic Journal*, 1837.] Lord Auckland wrote to Metcalfe, saying: "I think you have done all that can be done against the plague, and you have fully anticipated whatever I ventured to suggest."

sufferings were terrible, and clouded the last year of Metcalfe's connection with the Government of India. He received due praise, in public addresses, for his "judicious efforts for the relief of the distressed population during this calamitous year;" but he knew how little could be effected by human agency to diminish the horrors of such a visitation.

The Revenue Settlement of the North-Western Provinces was, at this time, being pushed forward with consummate energy under the auspices of Mr. Robert Bird, with whom Metcalfe was in constant correspondence. But the latter, whilst he thoroughly approved of the principle on which this settlement was based, sometimes doubted whether there were not too great a propensity at that time to do what some of the functionaries about him irreverently called "looking at everything through a theodolite." It has been shown how strong and consistent an advocate he was for the preservation of the village-communities; but he thought that this was best to be accomplished by protecting them against external aggression, and leaving their interior arrangements as much as possible to themselves. Whilst he admired the uncommon ability and the wonderful zeal with which Thomason,* Thornton, and others were pushing forward this great work, and omitted

* It is impossible not to observe with a melancholy kind of pleasure, in the demi-official correspondence of this period, the very high estimation in which Mr. Thomason, then a settlement-officer, was held by all the highest functionaries in the country. There was what may be called a scramble for his services in the most distinguished situations under Government, but he remained constant to Azimghur and the settlement. In one of Lord Auckland's letters to Sir Charles Metcalfe, the Governor-General speaks of him as "Mr. Thomason, whom I have wanted for the Law Commission, whom Mangles wants for every commissionership that is vacant, and whom you probably want for much else."

nothing that was calculated to stimulate their exertions, he still sometimes questioned whether the minute surveys which were being carried on, and the amount of interference that was exercised, were without many disadvantages, both present and prospective.

The political relations of several of the native states of Upper India, both with our Government and with each other, were also, at this time, brought under the consideration of the Lieutenant-Governor. Centralization had not then reached the height, which it subsequently attained; and even in cases, the decision of which did not belong to his Government, his opinions were sought by the Governor-General, and, based as they were upon long experience and accurate knowledge of persons and places, generally prevailed. Some of his papers, written at this period, were among the most elaborate and the most masterly of his productions. And, it is still more worthy of record, that they were permeated with the high principle of a true Christian statesman, who does not hesitate to proclaim the doctrine that it is ever the standard policy to dare to do right. It was in such a spirit as this that he addressed himself to the consideration of international disputes :—

"Several questions have lately occurred, in which our interests and those of other powers and individuals are at variance, and in the decision of which we are likely to be biassed by regard for our own benefit, unless we enter with a liberal spirit into the claims and feelings of others, and make justice alone the guide of our conduct. . . . . In all these cases, the right on our part to come to the decision apparently most beneficial for our own interests, seems to me to be doubtful. Had our right been clear, I should be far from having any desire to suggest its relinquishment. But when the right is doubtful, when we are to be judges in our own cause, when, from our power, there is little or no probability of any resistance to our decision, it behoves us, I conceive, to be very careful, lest we should be unjustly biassed in our own favour, and to be liberal only in examining the claims and pretensions of other parties. The Christian precept 'Do as

you would be done by,' must be right in politics as well as in private life; and even in a self-interested view we should, I believe, gain more by the credit of being just and liberal to others, than by using our power to appropriate to ourselves everything to which we could advance any doubtful pretension."

His private correspondence was extensive—but it was chiefly of a demi-official character,* with men of eminent station in different lines of the public service. Among others with whom he kept up this kind of intercourse, were Sir Henry Fane, the Commander-in-Chief,† and

* He could, however, find time, as he had always the taste, to correspond on literary subjects; among others, with Mr. Macnaghten on his edition of the "Alif Leila," in which Metcalfe took great interest.

† Among other subjects on which Metcalfe and Fane corresponded in 1837, was the best method of conquering the Punjaub, though both were profoundly impressed with the conviction that justice and expediency alike required that we should leave it alone. The discussion was entirely theoretical and speculative. Sir Henry Fane had visited Lahore on the occasion of the marriage ceremony of Nao Nehal Singh, and Sir Charles Metcalfe felt some curiosity to know what were the impressions left on his mind regarding the relative strength of the two powers, and the issue of the contest if we were to try conclusions with the Sikhs. In answer to Metcalfe's questions, the Commander-in-Chief drew up an admirable paper, in which, after entering speculatively into the questions proposed to him, he declared, in his opinion, "a case *could* hardly occur which would render it wise for us to overturn the Sikh power, or to overrun the Punjaub, or to extend ourselves to the westward." "Every advance," he added, "you might make beyond the Sutlej to the westward, in my opinion, adds to your military weakness. . . . . If you want your empire to expand, expand it over Oude, or over Gwalior, and the remains of the Mahratta empire. Make yourselves complete sovereigns of all within your bounds. But let alone the far west!" It need not be said that in all this Metcalfe entirely concurred. There was another passage, too, in this paper, which accorded pleasantly with Metcalfe's views. Sir Henry Fane said that in the event of a war with the Punjaub, our great difficulty would lie in the want of young, active, capable commanding

Daniel Wilson, the Bishop of Calcutta. Each held Metcalfe in high regard, and looked to him for the furtherance of public objects connected with his own particular profession. And the Lieutenant-Governor, now a soldier and now a clerk, gave to both abundant satisfaction. Both had tasted of his noble hospitality at Agra, and had left him with the most affectionate admiration of the many fine qualities of their host.

His intercourse with Lord Auckland was frank and unreserved.* They were frequently corresponding with each other privately on affairs of State. The Governor-General, who had applied himself sedulously to acquire a right understanding of the many great political and administrative questions brought before him, and whose early letters exhibit a remarkable acquaintance with subjects which it ordinarily takes long to master, invited as I have said, the ripe Indian statesman to deliver his

officers. "My services," he said, "have been where generals were from thirty-five to forty-five (both French and English), men in their full vigour; and I am quite sure that men who came to India as cadets in 1782-3, could not compete with such as I allude to. I know that when I commanded a brigade, or a division about that time (1808 to 1814), I could do, and have done, more of the work of a soldier in twenty-four hours, than I could do now in four times the period. I judge of others by myself." What Metcalfe thought, with reference to his own service, of the comparative advantages of employing old and young men, has been already seen. (*Appendix*, Vol. I.)

* Before Metcalfe left Calcutta the Governor-General wrote to him: "I may rather wish to consult you upon some points, than venture to instruct you on any. In truth, all my feelings and opinions are in favour of that system of firmness and forbearance which I know it to be both your principle and practice to pursue; and it has been only in the certainty you would well and ably pursue it that I have been eager for the acceptance of the proffered appointment. There can be no reason for your making the journey with undue haste. As it is, I shall have personally to lament that I have seen so little of you."—[*March* 28, 1836.]

opinions freely, and never shrink from an open avowal of dissent.* The question of a war with Runjeet Singh, to restrain him from aggressive operations against Scinde, came up for consideration at this time; and, at the request of Lord Auckland, Metcalfe wrote a letter to his lordship, in which the whole subject, in its military and political bearings, in its present and prospective aspects, was exhausted, and with a display of knowledge and ability which cannot but excite the admiration of the reader. There were some important questions, especially in connection with the policy of interfering in the affairs of the countries beyond the Indus, regarding which the two statesmen entertained adverse opinions.† But they

* "I should be sorry, indeed," wrote Lord Auckland, "if you should hesitate to write to me with perfect frankness upon any subject, and particularly so upon occasions in which you differ from me in your views of public policy, and when a knowledge of your opinions may be most useful to me."—[*October* 3, 1835.] The subject, I believe, which called forth this kindly expostulation, was the navigation of the Indus, at which Metcalfe always looked askance. He had a remarkable prescience of the evil consequences that were likely to result from any interference in that quarter. This subject has been touched upon in a preceding chapter.

† Not that Lord Auckland at this time had any idea of the kind of interference to which he subsequently lent himself. He wrote to Metcalfe in the early part of 1837, saying: "You are quite right in believing that I have not a thought of interference between the Afghans and Sikhs. I should not be sorry to see strong, independent, and commercial powers established in Afghanistan; but, short of Persian or Russian occupation, their present state is as unsatisfactory as possible, with national, family, and religious feuds so inveterate as almost to make any one party ready to join any invader against another. It is out of the question that we can ever gain direct power or influence amongst them." And again, in another letter: "All idea of a 'dominant influence,' with powers so broken and disjointed as are those of Caubul and the neighbouring countries, is, of course, out of the question."

held each other in the highest esteem, and knew that they were working together earnestly and sincerely for the public good.

During his residence in Agra, he exercised the same liberal hospitality that he had before done in other places; but his habits were for the most part retired. He seldom went beyond the limits of his own residence even for purposes of exercise. The evening drive was abandoned, and, in its place, he was wont to take the air at the top of his house. The reason which he assigned for this was, that when he went abroad, the natives waylaid him with petitions, which they would throw into his carriage; and this, on many accounts, he found inconvenient. But the same inexhaustible charity and generosity which had so distinguished his career in Calcutta, were here equally conspicuous. He was at all times a princely giver.

In the summer of 1837, Lord Auckland formed the resolution of quitting Calcutta at the commencement of the ensuing cold season, and journeying towards the Upper Provinces. Then arose a question regarding the authority to be exercised by the Governor-General within the territories over which Metcalfe presided as Lieutenant-Governor. It was, in itself, rather an embarrassing question; but Lord Auckland felt that the best solution of it would be found in the good sense and the good feeling of the two men representing the concurrent—it was hoped not conflicting—authorities:—

"The are some here," he wrote to Metcalfe, in June, "who foresee difficulty in the relationship in which you and I may stand to each other, when I invade your provinces. I foresee none. We are happily in the habit of agreeing on very many subjects; where we differ, of frankly expressing our differences; and when we have so expressed them, our co-operation—thanks to your cordiality and kindness—has been complete. There may be some embarrassment, rather nominal than real, on the score of patronage. I shall be assailed by the impatient, the ambitious, and

the discontented. My attention may possibly be drawn, though this is not likely, to the propriety of change in persons and in things; and, at all events, I should endeavour to receive with encouragement the officers, civil or military, from whom the State has to acknowledge, or may expect, good service. For these objects the office of the Governor-General should not be shorn of the powers and paramount influence which have hitherto been attached to it; but, on the other hand, it would be quite wrong, if he were supposed, upon entering the North-West Provinces, at once to assume and to exercise a right of interfering with the Lieutenant-Governor, and of disturbing the even course of his administration. What should, upon all this, be the general understanding—where the just medium should be, whether it should be defined at all (I rather think not), and in what manner, I am far from having a decided opinion, and would gladly learn what you think. I am only confident for us both that each will be anxious to uphold the dignity of the other without injuring his own."*

* The difficult question was, however, solved by the circumstance alluded to in the following passages—the withdrawal of Sir Charles Metcalfe in time to prevent a collision of authority.

"My preparations," wrote Lord Auckland, "have not slackened, and the 20th of October still stands as the day of our departure from Calcutta. We purpose finding our camp at Benares, to march to Allahabad, Lucknow, and Agra, and if, as all seem to think right, I should become my own Lieutenant-Governor upon your abdication, I may stay longer at Agra than it was my original intention to do. I need not add that in all this the more that I can see of you with the least inconvenience to you, the more will it be to my pleasure and advantage. It should not be difficult for me to be at Agra before Christmas; and we might in that case pass some days together; but as the time approaches we will endeavour to make our plans and our wishes meet."—[*August* 28, 1837.]

"You will see that the act giving me full powers is out, with a resolution announcing that when I lose you, I shall become my own Lieutenant-Governor. When this takes place, you may be assured that I shall be disposed to disturb as little as possible either the prospects of persons, or the current of things."—[*September* 7, 1837.]

Some time before, the question thus suggested might have perplexed and disquieted Metcalfe; it now gave him little concern. For although he was devoting himself diligently to the affairs of his Government, he had an uneasy and disturbing sense all the while that his connection with the North-Western Provinces was likely to be of brief duration. When the Government of Madras, a little time before, had been about to be vacated by Sir Frederick Adam, it was generally believed in India that Sir Charles Metcalfe would be his successor. He had lost a Government by the abolition of the Agra Presidency, and he had gained great credit from the home authorities by undertaking, at their earnest request, the Lieutenant-Governorship of the North-Western Provinces. By this disinterested act he had established a claim to promotion, which could hardly be disregarded. But rumours presently reached him to the effect that the Madras appointment was not to be bestowed upon him—that his claims were to be set aside, because he had forfeited the confidence of the Home Government by liberating the Indian press. What he felt and what he did when these tidings reached him, may be gathered from the following letter to his aunt:—

SIR CHARLES METCALFE TO THE HON MRS. MONSON.

"*Agra, February* 1, 1837.

"MY DEAREST AUNT,—My best thanks for your affectionate letter of August 26. It is the renewal of correspondence with England—for all my friends naturally ceased to write when they expected me home. You are all mistaken in supposing that I look to England with reluctance. On the contrary, I look to it with the assurance that I shall enjoy greater happiness there than I ever can expect in India. I have certainly great reluctance to quit the important duties which it has been my lot to be charged with in this country; but I shall rejoice when I can quit them, or rather whenever I can go home without having to reproach

myself for abandoning the post which it seems to be the will of Providence that I should occupy. . . . . Fortune was not my object, for I have enough; and should be happier in a cottage than in a palace. . . . . Neither was I influenced by ambition; for, if that were my guide, I should go to England. But in reality I have no desire for anything that this world can bestow; and look only to the creditable performance of my duty and the affectionate intercourse of my friends as the sources of happiness. Be assured, therefore, that whenever I may think it consistent with my duty to go to England, I shall go with delight. And that may be soon, for reports have reached this country of my being in disgrace with the Court of Directors for an act dictated by plain common-sense—namely, the legalization of the liberty of the press—and of my having in consequence lost the government of Madras. I do not care a straw for the government of Madras, and am probably better where I am; but I do not mean to serve in avowed disgrace. I, therefore, some months ago, took steps to obtain from the Court of Directors a declaration of their present sentiments regarding me, and shall be guided in my conduct by the result, which I shall probably know in a short time. The supposed intentional exclusion from the Government of Madras, as an act of displeasure, is inconsistent with the leaving in my hands of the higher commission of Provisional Governor-General; but the report was too generally and confidently stated to be passed over without notice; so I thought it right to seek explanation at the fountain-head. I shall not, therefore, be surprised if I find myself with you next year—and most certainly not sorry. . . . . .

"Ever yours most affectionately,

"C. T. METCALFE."

To Mr. Tucker he wrote in May, upon the same subject:—

". . . . . Not long after (the end of March), we received intelligence of Lord Elphinstone's appointment to Madras, which, or rather the reports regarding my exclusion, by which that announcement was accompanied, induced me, after waiting for more certain information, which I did not receive, to address the letter, which will have been before you, to the Secretary to the Court; and having done that, I thought it right to await the issue, without intruding privately on any of the members, who would have to come to a public resolution thereon. I was told

that my best friends in the Court had turned against me; and as no one certainly was so well entitled to that designation as yourself, that information, coupled with your silence, led me to suppose that I had lost your good opinion, along with that of others, by what I considered a very innocent and an unavoidable act.

"The loss of the Madras Government did not give me any concern; but the asserted dissatisfaction of the Court distressed me, and I felt that I could not remain in a state of implied disgrace. I therefore wrote as I did to your Secretary; and now await, and am expecting, the Court's reply, on the receipt of which I shall have to make up my mind as to the course that I ought to pursue. I hope that the answer will be so decided, one way or the other, as to prevent my being puzzled by doubt."

In July he wrote again to Mrs. Monson, saying that he was still in doubt. The letter which he had written to the Court of Directors in the preceding autumn, was still, he said, unanswered; and without the answer, he could not decide whether to remain in India or return to England. But on the 11th of August he wrote that the expected answer had been received, and that he had determined to proceed to England:—

"I told you," he said, "I would write as soon as I knew whether I should stay in India or return to England. I have since received the letter that I looked for from the Court of Directors, and as it is not satisfactory, nor such as I think I was entitled to expect, I have determined on retiring from the Company's service during the approaching sailing season, and hope to reach home in June or July, 1838—just thirty-eight years from the time of quitting it! I shall have great happiness in seeing you again; but it is melancholy to recollect that you are the only one of those dear to me, then grown up, who will be alive to greet my return; and that all others—however dear to me—were then children. I speak of my own family. Of Indian friends there are already several at home. God's will be done. We must not lament the want of blessings that we have not; but rather enjoy what we have."

So Sir Charles Metcalfe determined to proceed to England, for reasons which may be partly gathered from these private letters. But the whole story of his resignation, and of the circumstances which preceded it, must be given in another shape.

CHAPTER VII.

[1837—1838]

RESIGNATION AND DEPARTURE.

Correspondence with the Home Government — Conduct of the Court of Directors—Resignation of the Lieutenant-Governorship of Agra—Return to Calcutta—Reception there—Farewell Entertainments—Embarkation for England—General Remarks on Metcalfe's Indian career.

On the 8th of August, 1837, Sir Charles Metcalfe addressed a letter to Lord Auckland, saying that it was with great regret he found himself compelled to resign his office of Lieutenant-Governor of the North-Western Provinces on or about the following 1st of January, in order that he might embark for England during the approaching sailing season; and retire from the service of the East India Company. "The cause of this application," he added, "will be found in the following correspondence."

A year had then nearly elapsed since Metcalfe had written the letter, the answer to which he had expected with so much interest and anxiety. He had, as I have already observed more than once, very high and refined ideas of the relations subsisting between public servants and the Government by which they are employed. He thoroughly understood their reciprocal duties. And as he did not lightly regard the obligations which were imposed upon the public servant, but by the practice of a life spent in the zealous performance of his duties declared his sense of the loyalty and devotion which were legitimately

demanded from him; so, on the other hand, he believed that he was entitled to demand in return the confidence and approbation of those in whose service he was expending without stint all the energies of his life. He imposed certain conditions on himself, and he believed that he had a right to impose certain conditions upon others. The conditions which he imposed upon himself were, that he should serve the State, thoroughly, conscientiously, unceasingly, giving himself up wholly to his employers. The conditions which he imposed upon them were, that they should have faith in his wisdom and integrity—confidence in his zeal and devotion. He would not consent to any other terms of alliance. Any diminution of efficiency on the one hand, or of confidence on the other, in his estimation dissolved the compact. He would not have served the State for a day as an unprofitable servant; and he would not serve it as an unhonoured one. It was this high sense of reciprocal duty which had made Metcalfe what he was. And he was not now, after nearly forty years of public service, to subside into a latitudinarian, and graduate in the "Well-enough" school.

Sir Charles Metcalfe believed that he had forfeited the confidence of his employers; and he did not doubt for a moment that it was therefore his duty to relieve them from the necessity of maintaining a longer connection with a high public functionary in whose wisdom and discretion they had no longer any trust. Whether he were justified in this belief is another question. It was commonly reported that he was not appointed Governor of Madras because he had liberated the Indian Press. It was something much more than a common report that the Court of Directors, as a body, greatly disapproved of the liberation of the Indian press. That was a substantive fact of which there was a tremendous exposition in a certain denunciatory

despatch. And as the Court of Directors some little time before had been unanimous in their desire to appoint Metcalfe to the Governor-Generalship of India, it certainly was not a very overstrained inference that if he had not fallen under their displeasure, they would have endeavoured to secure his nomination to the Government of Madras.

But there was something much more than an inference of this kind to justify Metcalfe's conclusion. He received what he had a right to consider good and authentic information from England, to the effect that the free-press measure had imposed an obstacle to his advancement. It is true that the intelligence which he received from the India House was principally of a negative character. One director wrote to him that he did not know that the case was, so; another wrote, that he had been out of town, and wanted accurate information on the subject; a third informed Metcalfe that he had never been proposed as Governor of Madras, and, therefore, never rejected. But one member of the Court, conspicuous for his truthfulness and candour, wrote to the Agra Governor, saying: "The late chairman assured me that your name had twice been brought forward by him; but that you were objected to chiefly, as I understand, on the ground of your emancipation of the press without communicating previously with the home authorities." But he added, at the same time:

"That this measure has been most unpopular in the Court and elsewhere I know; but I do not believe that it deprived you of the Government. The same influence which operated against your succession on the former occasion, had full effect in the late instance, and with the same views. Hyderabad is not forgotten in particular quarters, and there are persons who never lose sight of their own interests. There is, moreover, a sort of feeling against the civil service in a particular quarter, and a very strong feeling in favour of the use of patronage to promote political objects. These were the real causes which operated against you. The press furnished the plea to one who had little to say, and

who commanded no influence. The current was strong in your favour two years ago, and carried with it even those who had not a friendly feeling towards you. When turned, this feeling had full play.*

The fact is, that the emancipation of the press had rather a negative than a positive effect on the decision of the question. That question was not decided positively against Metcalfe. It never, indeed, took a substantive formal shape; so that it was literally true that he had not been rejected. But that it cleared the way for the easy triumph of courtly interest is not to be doubted. It turned ardent friends and admirers into lukewarm supporters, and made the doubtful and the vacillating little less than open opponents. Since the Court of Directors had strenuously endeavoured to place Metcalfe at the head of the Supreme Government, he had won from them anew their approbation and applause by his acceptance, at their urgent request, of the Lieutenant-Governorship of the North-Western Provinces. And there is every reason to believe that, if he had not fallen under their displeasure on account of the bold act which had so needlessly alarmed them, they would have made an effort, and in all probability a successful one, to secure for their honoured servant the first minor government that might happen to be vacated. But instead of this, they suffered ministerial interest to have full sway, and thus virtually rejected Metcalfe by not supporting his claims.

* There was one staunch friend, who at this time stood up manfully for Sir Charles Metcalfe, and emphatically defended him against all imputations cast upon him, on account of the emancipation of the press. This was Lord William Bentinck, whose exertions in his behalf at the time Metcalfe never knew until after the death of his friend. Lord William's letter to Lord Melbourne is given in a subsequent chapter. It does honour alike to the head and to the heart of that great and good man.

Whether in the month of August, 1836, Sir Charles Metcalfe were sufficiently acquainted with all the circumstances of the case to take what I believe to be the correct view here taken of the conduct of the Court, does not clearly appear. But he was acquainted with the leading facts that the Court of Directors had disapproved and censured his press measures, and had not supported his claims to the Government of Madras. He believed, therefore, that he had forfeited the good opinion of the Court, and in this belief he wrote the following letter, seeking to be informed whether his impressions were correct:

"TO J. C. MELVILL, ESQ., SECRETARY TO THE EAST INDIA COMPANY.

"*Agra, August* 22, 1836.

"SIR,—Reports which have been for some time in circulation, induce me to trouble you with this address, and to request that it may be submitted to the Honourable the Court of Directors.

"I have been waiting, in the hope that some certain information would reach me, confirming or refuting these reports; but not having received any communication from England on the subject in any form, I am still in uncertainty as to the truth or error of the rumours which prevail.

"The reports alluded to are to the effect that I have fallen under the displeasure of the Court of Directors on account of the law passed by me as Governor-General in Council, legalising the liberty of the press, and that on the same account I lost the Government of Madras, which would otherwise have been conferred on me.

"The only part of those reports on which I wish to trouble the Honourable Court is that which relates to their displeasure.

"It is not my object on the present occasion to defend the law of the press. I leave that confidently to time and further consideration. It is due, however, to another to remark, that the measure originated with me, and not, as the Court are understood to suppose, with another member of the Government.

"Neither is it my intention to complain of my exclusion from the Government of Madras. No one, in my opinion, has a right

to complain of not being selected for any office. As, however, the Government of a Presidency had been conferred on me, which I lost by its abolition, and not from any fault on my part, nor from any diminution of confidence on the part of the Court, it did seem probable that the Court would embrace the first opportunity of restoring me to the position in which they had before placed me; and, therefore, that the first vacant Government would be conferred on me. That was the only pretension that I supposed myself to have to any Government; and I do not wish it to be imagined that I mean to express the slightest disappointment because the Government of Madras was otherwise disposed of; or that I have the presumption to conceive that any regard for my peculiar position ought to have interfered with the free choice of the Court.

"My only reason for soliciting the attention of the Court to the reports above noticed is, that, if true, they indicate that I have lost the confidence of the Court; a misfortune which would render it unbecoming on my part to retain the provisional appointment of Governor-General which I now hold.

"It is true that the reports in question are in some degree contradicted by the continuance of that provisional appointment; for if the Court, after deliberation, deemed me unworthy of a subordinate Government, they would hardly have left in my possession an appointment which, by an accident much to be deprecated, might any day place me at the head of the Government of India. On the other hand, those reports are supported by the known facts of the recorded displeasure of the Court at the legalization of the liberty of the Press; and by what appears to be the general understanding as to my exclusion from the Government of Madras. It is, therefore, possible that I may be holding my present appointments rather by the Court's forbearance than with any cordial desire on their part that I should exercise the important functions actually and provisionally assigned to me.

"After this tedious, but necessary, preamble, I come at length to the object of this letter; which will not require so much longer intrusion on the attention of the Honourable Court.

"If the reports which have reached this country from England be true; if I have really lost the confidence of the Court, and have fallen so low in their estimation as deliberately to be deemed now unworthy of the position which they accorded to me three years ago, in the Government of a subordinate Presidency; it is

my earnest entreaty that the Court will withdraw from me the provisional appointment of Governor-General; or otherwise intimate their pleasure to me, in order that I may resign that appointment, and retire from the service of the Company. I have no wish to retain, by forbearance, an appointment conferred on me when I was honoured with the confidence of the Court, if that confidence is gone; or to hold my office on mere sufferance; or to serve in any capacity under the stigma of displeasure and distrust.

"But if I retain the confidence of the Court unimpaired, it will be highly gratifying to me to know that I have been misled by erroneous reports in supposing the possibility of the contrary. In that case, I have no desire to retire from the public service. I am proud of the honour conferred by the provisional appointment of Governor-General. I take a great interest in the duties which I have to perform as Lieutenant-Governor of the North-Western Provinces of India, and I am willing to devote myself, with all my heart, to the service of the State, as long as health and faculties enable me to work to any useful purpose.

"I am aware that I lay myself open to reproof in imagining a want of confidence which has not been authentically announced to me by any of those means which the Court has at command. If I have erred in this respect, and have not had sufficient cause for this address, I trust that the Court will forgive the error. Having received on former occasions marked proofs of confidence and esteem, I could not rest easy under reports, in some degree strengthened by appearances, which indicated the loss of those favourable sentiments.

"I have the honour to be, sir,

"Your most obedient servant,

"C. T. METCALFE."

Long did Metcalfe wait, in incertitude and anxiety, for an answer to this letter. There were delays at home and delays abroad. The expected response came slowly from the India House, and travelled slowly to India after it had struggled out of Leadenhall-street. Steam communication at that time was not unknown; but there was nothing regular about it except its irregularity; and still the bulk of the correspondence, public and private, was despatched round the Cape of Good Hope. In August, 1836, he wrote

the above letter. In August, 1837, he received the following laconic answer:

"*East India House, April* 15, 1837.

"SIR,—I have had the honour to receive and to lay before the Court of Directors of the East India Company your letter dated at Agra the 22nd of August last, and I am commanded to express to you the Court's regret that you should have made a communication which appears to them to have been altogether unnecessary; as the continuance in you provisionally of the highest office which it is in the power of the Court to confer, might have satisfied you that their confidence had not been withdrawn.

"I have the honour to be, Sir,

"Your most obedient, humble servant,

"JAMES C. MELVILL, Secretary."

If the Court of Directors had been slow in responding to Metcalfe's appeal, he was by no means disposed to follow their example. He had, indeed, made up his mind regarding the course he would pursue, in anticipation of the reception of such a letter. He at once sat down, therefore, to unburden himself, and wrote the following rejoinder:

TO J. C. MELVILL, ESQ.

"*Agra, August* 5, 1837.

"SIR,—I have this day had the honour of receiving your letter of the 15th of April.

"I do not find therein any answer to my letter of the 22nd of August last; but I collect partly from the words, and partly from the tone—1st, that the Honourable Court is displeased with that letter; and 2nd, that the Honourable Court has no desire to retain my humble services.

"Under these impressions, I have no opinion but to take that step, which the Court must have expected, as the natural consequence of your letter.

"I propose accordingly to solicit permission from the Right Honourable the Governor-General in Council to resign my office of Lieutenant-Governor of the North-Western Provinces of India on or about the 1st of January next, in order that I may retire from the East India Company's service, and embark for England

during the approaching sailing season. My embarkation will necessarily annul my provisional appointment of Governor-General, which renders it the more incumbent on me to apprise the Honourable Court of my intention without delay.

"It is proper, from respect to the Honourable Court, and also due to myself, that I should not appear to be adopting this course abruptly and without reason. I will, therefore, trouble you with a review of the circumstances which have combined to render it in my opinion unavoidable.

"When the Presidency of Agra was formed, I was appointed to be its Governor, and received at the same time the still higher honour of the provisional appointment of Governor-General. In virtue of the latter, I held the office of Governor-General during the interval between the departure of Lord William Bentinck and the arrival of Lord Auckland. I was relieved from the office of Governor-General soon after the abolition of the Agra Presidency, and by the latter event I lost my appointment of Governor. The substituted office of Lieutenant-Governor of the North-Western Provinces was offered to me. It was naturally a question in my mind, whether I could with credit descend to the inferior office of Lieutenant-Governor after holding that of Governor, putting that of Governor-General, which was never more than temporary, entirely out of view. Had I yielded to the opinion of my friends, I should have declined the Lieutenant-Governorship; but the handsome manner in which the desire to retain my services in that office was evinced, both by the Court of Directors and the Governor-General, overcame the reluctance which I necessarily felt to descend; while the renewal of the provisional appointment of Governor-General, then conferred on me for the third time, prevented the appearance of degradation, and was a further assurance of the confidence of the Honourable Court. So far all was well; and I entered on my new office with the full intention of devoting myself to its duties for any period during which my services might be acceptable, or could be rendered with credit.

"But subsequently to those events, the Government of Madras became vacant. The eyes of the public in India were naturally turned towards me, simply because, as I had lost by accident the Government of one Presidency, it was thought just that I should succeed to that of another. Not only was the result contrary to this expectation, but it was accompanied by reports from England, on good authority, that I had been purposely passed over, and had lost the Government of Madras on account of the Act legal-

izing the liberty of the press, which had passed when I was Governor-General of India.

"The loss of the Government of Madras was a cause of regret to me only as it indicated, accompanied by those reports, the displeasure of the Honourable Court, and was therefore a mark of disgrace. It was not my intention to remain in the public service in a state of avowed degradation; nor could I have accepted an office inferior in degree to that of Governor, if I had supposed that I should be under a ban, or that there would be a bar on the part of the Home Government to my being replaced in a position equal to that which I had lost by the abolition of the Agra Presidency. At the same time, I did not wish to act hastily on reports which might possibly be unfounded. I did not doubt the right of the Court to nominate whom they chose as Governor of Madras. The Government of Madras was as nothing in my eyes. The only important consideration was the motive of my exclusion. That might admit of satisfactory explanation; or a temporary displeasure might subside, and mutual confidence and cordiality be restored by candid communication. I therefore addressed to you my letter of the 22nd of August last, stating fully my feelings under the circumstances described, and entreating that I might be informed in what position I stood, and what were the sentiments of the Court towards me.

"The Court pronounced that my letter was altogether unnecessary. With deference, I think that there was good and sufficient reason to seek an understanding with the Court for any one who regards the approbation of his superior as an essential condition of his servitude. Either I had lost or I retained the confidence of the Court. If the latter were the case, a few kind words to that effect would have assured me that I could continue to serve without discredit. Instead of which, I receive a laconic letter, taking no notice whatever of the sentiments expressed in mine, but conveying a reproof for having written it, given in a tone which leaves me no reason to suppose that the Court entertain the least desire for the continuance of my services.

"Under all these circumstances, I must conclude: 1st, that I was intentionally disgraced when I was passed over in the nomination of a Governor for Madras; 2nd, that the Court retain the sentiments under which that disgrace was purposely inflicted, and have no wish to remove the feelings which it was calculated to excite; and 3rd, that the Honourable Court must have been aware that

your letter of the 15th of April, with reference to mine of the 22nd of August last, could only produce the effect which it has produced, and consequently, that my resignation was contemplated in the despatch of that letter.

"I trust that I have sufficiently explained the causes which compel me reluctantly to retire from the public service, to which, if I could have remained with honour, I would willingly have devoted the whole of my life.

"I have the honour to be, sir,

"Your most obedient, humble servant,

"C. T. METCALFE."

Such was the correspondence, copies of which he forwarded to Lord Auckland, when, on the same day, he formally tendered his resignation of the Lieutenant-Governorship of the North-Western Provinces. By Lord Auckland this announcement was received with less astonishment than sorrow. "Your letter has pained," he wrote, "but has not surprised me, for I knew how strongly you felt upon the subject on which you had written to the Court; and although the answer admitted no decrease of confidence and regard, I felt that it was wanting in the cordiality of expression to which I knew that you looked, as the condition of your remaining in India. If I had been near you, I might have attempted to combat your resolution. As it is, I must deeply lament the loss for India of its best officer, and for myself of my best help. The name which you leave will be greatly and honourably regarded, and you will find with very many the same regard to welcome you at home. You have yet years and strength for active life; you have earned the fairest title to retirement; and I pity no man that he has to live in England. I am confident that when I join you there I shall find you in the enjoyment of all the happiness that I wish you. Of my own immediate plans I must take time to think, and will write to you in a few days. My first impression is,

that, at least during my residence in the North-West Provinces, I should attempt to do the work which you have so well done for me."*

That the India House letter was cold and formal (as India House letters commonly are), and altogether very unsatisfactory to one who looked for an unreserved expression of the Court's feelings and opinions, is not to be doubted. As Metcalfe truly said, it was no answer. It was an evasion of the real question. To cease from giving is one thing. To withdraw what is already given is another. To have cancelled Metcalfe's commission to succeed provisionally to the Governor-Generalship would have been an extreme measure, to which the Court, except under very violent provocation, would hardly have committed themselves. But it did not follow that, because they were not disposed to cancel this existing appointment, they would not—nay, that they did not, discourage his future promotion. It did not follow that, because they were not prepared openly to disgrace the most distinguished and the most popular of their servants, he had not incurred the displeasure, and, to some extent, forfeited the confidence of his employers.

That it was not intended by the Court that the letter should imply any forfeiture of confidence, I believe. Two of the most distinguished members of the direction—men whose integrity and ability would have adorned any station — Mr. Tucker and Mr. Edmonstone, afterwards assured him that, although the liberation of the press had been disapproved at the India House, the confidence of the Court had not been withdrawn from him—that his "various and highly valuable services" were justly appreciated—and that nothing was further from their intention or their wishes than that the "short and guarded" letter of

* *Lord Auckland to Sir Charles Metcalfe, Calcutta, August* 16, 1837.

their official organ should induce him to withdraw from their service.* But without any loss of dignity to the

* The passages in the letters of Mr. Tucker and Mr. Edmonstone are worth quoting. "I have not written to you lately," said the former gentleman, "partly because I was uncertain about your movements, partly because I had nothing of interest to communicate; but chiefly because I wished to ascertain and to communicate the answer of the Chairman to your letter dated in August last. That reply was only proposed to the Court a few days ago; and you will receive it, probably, as soon as you receive this. It is short and guarded; but I trust it will satisfy you that the Court, as a body, are far from wishing to dispense with your services in India. Your letter was received and read to the Court three or four months ago; and I should be uncandid if I told you that it made generally a favourable impression. It was by some considered to be uncalled for, and out of the regular course; but there are many who can justly appreciate your merits and services; and although the reply of the Chairman may appear to you dry and cold, I hope it will satisfy you that you had no ground whatever for suspecting that the Court had any intention or wish that you should retire from the service. I will not conceal from you that some of your measures were calculated to produce dissatisfaction (the emancipation of the press in particular); but I hope that we have not forgotten, and shall never forget, your various and highly valuable services." Mr. Edmonstone's letter was written immediately after Sir Charles Metcalfe's return to England. After declaring that there was not a member of the Court who did not lament his resignation on public grounds, the writer goes on to say: "Not being in a position to draw a distinction between the cold and formal language of an official announcement and a deliberate dictation of the Court, you had some reason to deduce from the answer to your letter on the subject of the press, a meaning which it certainly was not intended to convey—the more so, too, on account of the rumour which prevailed, and which had come to your knowledge, and apparently made so strong an impression upon you respecting the succession to the Government of Madras. On this last point I will only observe that, as far as *I* know, it was but a surmise, and that I heard it afterwards positively contradicted; I feel, however, that I ought not to pursue the discussion of this delicate subject beyond the purpose for which alone I have touched upon it at all—the vindication of the Court

Court, more might have been said in reply to such a letter from such a man. The distinguished services which he had rendered to the State might well have secured for him a little more cordiality even in an official letter. Perhaps, if his nature had been better understood—if "the very quick, and delicate, and noble sense of public character" which his friend Sherer years before said he regarded "with a sort of almost envious admiration,"* had been known to the framers of the letter, and the result which occurred had in any way been anticipated by them—such a letter would not have been written. But no one who knew him well could have doubted its effect upon one who entertained so exalted an idea of the relations which ought to subsist between a public servant and the Government, and, therefore, was so keenly alive both to official censure and official praise. He was under no obligation, he thought, to maintain those relations; but he was under an obligation to maintain them reproachless and undefiled.

With this impression strong upon his mind, Metcalfe had tendered his resignation; but that the act might not seem to be indecorously precipitate, and that no inconvenience might result from his sudden retirement, he intimated his desire to be relieved on or about the commencement of the new year. Lord Auckland had already determined upon proceeding to the Upper Provinces, and he now pro-

(whereof I was then a member) from the supposition which appearances had led you to entertain that its confidence had been withdrawn from you, and that the tenor of its reply to your explanatory address implied a wish, or expectation, that you should, or would, resign the public service. This was not, perhaps, needed, for since your arrival you must have been satisfied, from much higher and more important authority than mine, of the error of that supposition; but the strong and painful feeling I have on the subject, combined with the contents of your letter, has led me thus far to enter upon it."

* See *ante*, Vol. I., page 426, *note*.

posed, during his sojourn in that part of the country, to take the Government into his own hands. It was arranged that as the Governor-General prosecuted his march towards the north, Metcalfe should meet him on his way down to the Presidency; and that a steamer should be in readiness at Allahabad to convey the retiring statesman to Calcutta.

As the time for his departure drew near, public entertainments were given to Sir Charles Metcalfe, and addresses began to pour in upon him. During his residence in Agra he had greatly endeared himself to all classes of the community. Europeans and natives, and people of mixed blood, pressed forward to lay before him their valedictory offerings of gratitude and praise. The native address was really a native address—not the elaborate composition of an European scholar. It came in real Oriental garb, and was conceived by an Oriental mind, but it was truthful in spite of its Orientalism. The Eurasians spoke as before of what he had done for their own especial class; and the British residents spoke of the freedom of the press, and declared that "nothing had occurred, neither was there any just reason to suppose that anything would occur, to afford the slightest ground to doubt the judgment which caused its enactment."

To this last address Sir Charles Metcalfe returned an elaborate and emphatic answer. In it it may be said that he bade farewell to India, and justified his conduct as the liberator of the Indian press before the eyes of the world. It was as manly and dignified on the one hand, as it was calm and temperate on the other. This memoir would be incomplete if a line of it were omitted:*

* It was printed in the public papers at the time, and was read by thousands, but there are few among them who will not thank me for giving them an opportunity of reading it again.

"You are pleased to allude in terms of praise to my humble services during an uninterrupted employment of thirty-seven years in India. I should rejoice exceedingly if I could flatter myself with the persuasion that my endeavours have been in any great degree beneficial; but I feel, alas! that the results have been far below my wishes; and I have always been occasion to lament how inadequate is the portion of perceptible good effected by our best intentions and exertions.

"You bear important testimony to the benefit of the Act legalizing the liberty of the press in the opinion which you have declared on that subject. The worst that can be said of the liberty of the press is, that it may do harm. No one can doubt that it must work a vast deal of good. If, therefore, it neither does nor is likely to do mischief, it must be an unalloyed benefit. I regard the passing of that Act by the local Government of India as a glorious monument to the honour of the East India Company, and as a proof of the merit of its administration, notwithstanding defects from which no Government is entirely free. That Act evinces to the world that the Company's Government desires no concealment; that it is glad to have the most minute particulars of its Indian administration scrutinized and displayed to the gaze and criticism of the universe; that it seeks information and instruction wherever they are to be found; and that it does not wish to rule India as a conquered, ignorant, and enslaved, but as a cherished, enlightened, and free country.

"Whatever may be the will of Almighty God with respect to the duration of British rule in India, it would be vain and foolish to attempt to uphold it by shackling the people with the chains of ignorance. It would be unworthy policy to deny to them any benefit, consistent with the safety of the State, that can tend to elevate them in the scale of human beings. This country has been gained, and is maintained, by the sword; and honour be to the army to whom, under Providence, the British Empire owes this splendid possession. But, looking to future ages, our dominion can only endure by the affections of the people; by their feeling that, under British rule, they are more prosperous, and happy, and free, than they could be under any other Government; and that their welfare and our rule are linked together. I look to the liberty of the press as one of those measures which, by showing the paternal disposition of the Government, will tend to produce that result; a result not to be expected from a system of unconfiding restraint.

"For those who object to the liberty of the press there is another justification of the Act of Legalization, which is, that any other law on the subject was morally impossible. I will defy the ingenuity of man to devise any restrictions, short of absolute suppression, which no one would have attempted, that could have been effectual: modified restrictions had been tried, and had utterly failed. The press was practically free, though insecure, but the law regarding it was in absurd confusion. Throughout one Presidency, there was a code of restrictions so disused, that no Government would think of enforcing them. Throughout another Presidency, there were no restrictions, but perfect liberty by law, opposed in vain by the Government. In a third Presidency, there was restraint in the provinces, and liberty in the metropolis. Restrictions were most complete in the Presidency of Fort William, and there the practical liberty used was the greatest. In this chaos of the state of the press, when laws came to be made for all India, common sense pointed out that there was but one law that could be made with any effect—a law of liberty, and responsibility to courts of justice. If restrictions, where they existed, were not, and morally could not be enforced, how could they be introduced, with any reason or any prospect of success, where they previously did not exist? The press in India has been practically free from the moment when the Government discovered, about twenty years ago, that it could not enforce the censorship which then existed; that is, could not legally inflict the penalties attached to its violation on any one who, in the eye of the law, was a native of India. This being known, the censorship was set at defiance; and the press was of itself free. There came a code of restrictions which, being no more law than the censorship, was equally disregarded. There came another code of restrictions, which was made law in some places, and was no law in others; and whether it was law or no law, was equally disregarded and disused. All the good feelings of British Governors shrank from the habitual infliction of its penalties. All the spirit of British subjects restricted its shackles. The British subjects in India would have a free press, and the Government could not prevent it, without a despotism and oppression contrary to its own disposition, and totally opposed to the spirit of British institutions.

"Under all these circumstances, when it became my duty, as Governor-General of India, to propose a law for the press, there seemed to me but one course that could rationally be pursued. I

knew, by experience of the past, that restrictions would be inefficient; and that to legislate with a view to restraint, even if it had been desirable, would justly expose the Government to ridicule, and be of no avail. The time was peculiarly favourable for full liberty, as the Government had then acquired the power of legislation, and could provide by law against real danger to the safety of the State, that might from any cause arise; which before it could not do. The time was favourable for another reason also. It was clear that the liberty of the press would some day come, and it was better to grant it with a good grace than to wait until it was extorted. A people gradually habituated to the use of the press as a customary part of their institutions, is much less likely to abuse it than if it were forced from an unwilling Government, and, in a manner, seized upon by clamour and agitation in a period of excitement. It must always be a fault to defer acts of grace until they cease to be so considered, and are, therefore, of no effect in winning good-will. The circumstances, therefore, the time, the intrinsic merits and benefits of a free press, and the impossibility of enacting restrictions with any prospect of success, all combined to point out the legalization of the liberty of the press as the only course to be pursued. I should have been ashamed of myself if I had followed any other. As it is, whatever its consequences may have been to me, I never can regret the measure. Under the circumstances, it was the only Act on the subject that could be passed with any chance of success and efficiency. It was an act of prudence and common sense. It was, also, I trust, a measure of great public benefit.

"You have alluded to this Act as the supposed cause of my retirement from the public service. This is a subject on which I have some difficulty in offering explanation. I am loth to make a mystery of what, as far as I am concerned, is a very plain matter; but I am apprehensive that, in entering into details, I might deviate from proper respect to authorities, to whom respect is due from all, and gratitude especially from me, for repeated distinctions spontaneously conferred. In what I am about to say, I trust that I shall not depart from the obligations prescribed by either the one or the other of these sentiments. You may remember reports which prevailed last year, stating that I was in disgrace with the Home authorities, on account of the liberty of the press. That was not a position in which I could remain with comfort. I sought information at the fountain-head, with a view to a better understanding, without success. The reply was not

explicit; but its uncordial tone, indicative of alienation, satisfied me that the reports which had prevailed were not untrue, and that I could no longer remain in the service of the East India Company with credit or satisfaction to myself. I do not state these facts under any notion of being aggrieved; neither do I presume to question the conduct of those authorities. They have an indisputable right to exercise their judgment on mine. Their displeasure, from whatever cause proceeding, may be just: but, just or otherwise, its effect on me is the same. I cannot continue to serve with such an impression permanently prevailing against me. I quit my post with reluctance. I cannot be happier anywhere than I have been at Agra. With important duties, affectionate companions, and a friendly society, I have here enjoyed much of what I most value in life. With great measures in progress, and the aid of functionaries of the highest character and qualifications in the offices of control and superior importance; with a civil service full of honour, zeal, and ability; and abundance of merit and efficiency in every branch of public employment, I had every prospect of a successful and beneficial administration. I was perfectly content. I desired no change; and if I could have remained with honour, I know no limit that I should voluntarily have put to my continuance in this office, except loss of health or faculties. I quit my duties and my residence among you with great regret; but the act is my own, and I alone am responsible for it. I may have been mistaken; I may have been misled by erroneous information; I may have misconstrued the circumstances that have occurred; but if that information and my construction be correct, as I believe them to be, I had no other course open to me, in my opinion, than that which I have adopted. It is a matter of feeling. Had I been differently constituted; had I been blind or indifferent to manifest estrangement, I might have remained; and I should, perhaps, have been permitted to die in the service in which I was born, in which the best years of my life have been passed, and to which I would willingly have devoted the remainder.

"That will now glide away in another country, if I live to reach it; the country which we all most love, and to which we all look for rest after our Indian labours. You express the kindest wishes—you speak of happiness and usefulness. Happiness, with the blessing of the Almighty, I have no doubt of enjoying, in the society of affectionate relatives and friends, and in the delights of reading and retirement. Of the power of public usefulness, I

have no expectation, and great doubt. The only tempting theatre for public exertion is Parliament, where the great interests of the country are promoted or marred; but the violence of party spirit, to which the welfare of the empire is often sacrificed, the uselessness of any one whose only party is his country, the want of local reputation and influence, the corrupt practices of candidates and voters, and the utter ruin to moderate means of contested elections, make a formidable array of obstacles against any attempt to push myself into the Imperial Senate, even if I could suppose that I might be of any utility there. The retirement, therefore, of private life, where, no doubt, the greatest happiness is to be found, seems to be my future destiny. I shall, nevertheless, be ready to take a part in public affairs whenever I am called by duty, or, in other words, whenever I have an opportunity of being useful; for I consider it to be the duty of every man to serve his country to the utmost of his ability; and if I ever become a public man in England, my long attachment to India will naturally lead me to exert myself for her welfare and benefit, and for her permanent union with the British empire, in the ties of mutual interest, the only security for mutual affection.

"I ought to apologize for having addressed you at such length on subjects connected with my own views and feelings; but you must in part blame yourselves. You have overwhelmed me with kindness: my heart is open, and I have been pouring out its contents without restraint, to friends whose cordiality I have experienced. Permit me now to say farewell. May every good attend you. The period of my residence among you, but for the miseries of the poor, this season, from drought, would have been one of the happiest eras of my life. I part from you with reluctance and sorrow; and with heartfelt sentiments towards you of respect, gratitude, and affection. Many of us, I hope, may meet again in another land. God bless you all."

Whilst all these demonstrations of the respect and affection of those by whom he had recently been surrounded were lightening the pain of departure, other testimonials, of a different but not less honourable character, were enhancing the self-content with which it was his privilege to retrace the incidents of his long official career in India. Farewell letters, written in strong language of admiring attachment, not less sincere for the

Orientalism which glittered upon it, came to him from all the principal native princes and chiefs with whom he had held diplomatic intercourse. Foremost among these were the King and Princes of Delhi; the Rajah of Bhurtpore, whom he had set upon the throne; and his old antagonist, Runjeet Singh, who had never forgotten the youthful ambassador whom thirty years before he had endeavoured to outwit. He had watched Metcalfe's progress from a distance with remarkable interest; had thoroughly appreciated the great qualities which the English gentleman had manifested at so early a period of his career;* and often declared what he now said in his letter, that he regarded Metcalfe as "the founder of the union and attachment between the two high states, according to the firmly established treaty"—union and attachment which he sometimes thought would not long survive the retirement of his old friend.†

On the 18th of December, 1837, all the troops at Agra were under arms to do honour to the departure of Sir Charles Metcalfe. On the last day of the old year he joined the camp of the Governor-General at Cawnpore, and on the following day a Government notification announced that he had received the sanction of the Governor-General to relinquish his charge of the office of Lieutenant-

* When, on the fall of the Sikh Empire, the property of Runjeet and his descendants fell into the hands of the British conquerors, there was found in the royal treasure-house Metcalfe's portrait, which had been presented to the Maharajah in 1808, with an inscription on the back, indicating the interest and affection with which he regarded the original. The picture is now in the possession of a member of Lord Metcalfe's family, to whom it was presented by Lord Dalhousie.

† A confidential enclosure expressed an anxious desire that Metcalfe might be present at the approaching interview between Runjeet and Lord Auckland. "After that," said the Maharajah, "you may do as you like."

Governor of the North-West Provinces. "The Governor-General," it was added, "is pleased to direct that Sir Charles Metcalfe shall continue to receive all the honours due to the station of Lieutenant-Governor, and that the officers of his personal staff shall remain attached to him until he may finally vacate that office by his embarkation for Europe."

As he continued his march towards the Presidency, numerous demonstrations of respect and attachment greeted the departing statesman. At Allahabad, to which place a steamer had been despatched to convey him from that point to Calcutta, a public meeting was held. The address, which was then voted, emphatically spoke of his judicious measures for the relief of the distressed population during the famine-year, and his strenuous exertions to obviate the threatened scourge of the preceding one. Soldiers and civilians, merchants and tradesmen, Europeans, natives, and Eurasians united to do him honour. And at the head of the list stood the name of that excellent public servant, Mr. R. M. Bird, who had laboured so assiduously under him in the great work of revenue settlement.

His residence in Calcutta was brief; but from first to last it was a great ovation. He had taken his passage for England in a Bristol ship, called the *St. George*.* The vessel was to sail on the 15th of February. The interval, though brief, was a busy one. Entertainment followed entertainment—address followed address. The cold season had been one of unusual animation; and Metcalfe arrived to find the social energies of his friends well-nigh expended by the constant demands that had been made upon them by oft-repeated festivities. But his presence was a signal for renewed exertion. There were Metcalfe dinners, and

* His sister—Mrs. Smythe—was resident at Clifton; and he was anxious to proceed at once to her residence, without the delay of passing through the metropolis.

Metcalfe balls, and Metcalfe meetings; and no one was contented who had not drunk, or danced, or spoken in honour of the "honestest statesmen we have ever had,"* and the most hospitable and loveable of men."

Among other entertainments that were given to him, was one in especial celebration of the freedom of the press. The Free Press Dinner had now become an anniversary festival in Calcutta; but this was the first and last occasion on which the liberator himself graced it with his presence. Some long and able speeches were now made, and there was no lack of enthusiasm and applause. But they who expected that Metcalfe would speak out freely on the subject of the press law, and his retirement from the public service, were grievously disappointed. When he rose to speak, there was a burst of enthusiasm so loud and so long-protracted that a man of much less sensibility might well have been overcome. He said little; and that little under the influence of deep emotion. In truth, his answer to the Agra address was a sufficient response to all such demonstrations; and, perhaps, Metcalfe intended that it should serve as a quittance in full of all similar obligations.

At other public entertainments he was equally concise in his thanksgivings. A public ball was given to him at the Town-Hall a few days before his departure; and then the enthusiasm of the ladies at Calcutta, who cared little about the liberation of the press, kept pace with that of their lords. The after-supper addresses called forth many tears. It was Metcalfe's last meeting with the society of the capital in which he was so well known and so much beloved. One incident which distinguished it is worthy of record. It will never be forgotten by those who sat in the banquet-room on that February night. After the health of Sir Charles Metcalfe had been drunk, and he had returned thanks in due course, Captain Taylor, of the

* Speech of Mr. Theodore Dickens.

Madras army,* rose unexpectedly, and proposed the health of the guest of the evening as the "Soldier of Deeg." Many then heard for the first time how, thirty-three years before, young Charles Metcalfe had buckled on his sword and entered the breach with the leaders of the storming party. But it was a lesson in history which will never be forgotten. It is impossible to describe the sensation which it produced in an assembly already excited to enthusiasm, so many of the components of which were followers of the great profession of arms.

Metcalfe was a true soldier, and it pleased him to be thus honoured. But it was as a civilian that he had made his reputation, and his brethren of the Civil Service were honourably proud of him. On the day before his departure, a deputation waited upon him with an address expressive of the desire of the members of the Civil Service "to mark, by a public testimonial, the respect which they entertained for his eminent private virtues; the admiration with which they regarded his public career; and their sense of the honour which had been reflected upon the service at large by the distinction which had been achieved by one of its members." The testimonial was to be "a diamond star of the order of Knighthood, by which the late King so justly acknowledged the value of his services." Such a tribute was, as Metcalfe said, "beyond measure affecting;" and when he added, that he should ever cherish such a mark of their esteem, he uttered no mere stereotyped formality. There was found in his will especial mention of his "diamond star collar."

On the 15th of February, 1838, Sir Charles Metcalfe, after an absence of thirty-eight years from England, set

* He had come round to Calcutta on a Post-office commission. He was a man of great energy and ability, and when he died—as he did soon afterwards—the State lost one of its most promising servants.

his face towards his native land.* A numerous party of friends went to the place of embarkation to bid him a final adieu, and to waft after him their parting benedictions. It would be a poor common-place to say that he "left a gap behind him." It is sufficient to state that—he went.

As I write, sixteen years have passed away since Metcalfe embarked on board the ship *St. George*. But his memory is as fresh in the affections of the people of India as though he had but yesterday departed from among them. He left behind him a great and a cherished name. It is a common thing, when it is asked what Metcalfe did for India, to answer that he liberated the Indian press. The next question ought always to be, how he attained the position which enabled him to liberate the Indian press. I am not likely to underrate the advantages of a free press. But it is not in this, or in any one individual measure, that we are to look for the materials of his fame as an Indian statesman. It was not what he did at any one time, but what he was continually doing, that entitled him to the gratitude of mankind. Separate acts of statesmanship are lost in the oneness and completeness of his character as a statesman. He rose by the force and consistency of his personal character to the highest post which he could occupy in the Government of India. He had set his face steadfastly, from his very boyhood, towards the acquisition of vice-regal power and dignity; and he attained it, not by any acts of spasmodic energy, but by a life of sustained earnestness, unintermitting labour, and undeviating integrity. In every situation in which he had been placed he had acquitted himself well, because he had always addressed himself to the work before him with a high sense of the responsibility of his vocation, and a

* His friend and secretary, Captain J. M. Higginson, accompanied him.

brave resolution to do what he conceived to be right with all the power with which God had gifted him, whatever might be the opinions of others, and whatever the sacrifice of self. That his abilities were of a high order is not to be questioned; but it was not the quickness of his parts so much as the courage and the honesty which ever employed them in the right direction, that lay at the root of his success.

A more straightforward politician never lived. He established his reputation, as a diplomatic officer, very early in life; but in one sense he was no diplomatist. He could not tread in any crooked ways. In this respect his Indian career, of which I am now writing, furnishes a remarkable practical negation of the common belief, that much concealment and much deceit are necessary conditions of diplomatic success. Although his contests were with men whose ordinary weapons were falsehood and fraud, his victories were ever gained by the innate force of truth. Whilst his opponents were wandering in all sorts of devious paths, he went straight to the point, unmasked their cunning, and shamed them by his openness and sincerity. In the camp of Runjeet Singh, where a more brilliant and a more experienced man might have immersed himself in failure, the boy-ambassador laid the foundation of his fame. His success was the result mainly of the straightforwardness of his dealings. But in this, as on other occasions, an important handmaiden was found in the fine temper of the man. He was as free from malignity as he was from guile. Under great provocation he was cool and forbearing; and no one ever gained an advantage over him by disturbing the just balance of his mind. He had never a hasty word to recall, or a hasty action to regret. He was prompt to act; not quick to determine. He sent in his final resignation of the service immediately on the receipt of the India House letter,

which he believed to be virtually a condemnatory one; but all through the year he had been considering how he should act in the event of the receipt of such a letter.

The straightforwardness which so distinguished his moral, was a conspicuous feature also in his intellectual, character. His despatches and minutes were ever remarkable for their directness of purpose. It was his wont to make up his mind thoroughly on any given subject, and to state his views clearly and distinctly, without any gloss of conditions and reservations. He was of too fearless and manly a nature to be continually thinking of leaving for himself some loop-hole of retreat. He did not know what it was to trim. And he never left his meaning to be guessed at. Among all the numberless letters, despatches, and minutes which Metcalfe wrote during his connection with the Government of India, I do not remember to have chanced upon an obscure sentence. If language was given us for the concealment of our thoughts, no man ever made a worse use of it than Charles Theophilus Metcalfe.

There was a simplicity—a massiveness, in his public writings and in his political conduct very characteristic of the man. He did not trouble himself with secondary considerations, or encumber great questions with petty details. Lord William Bentinck said of him—"He never cavilled upon a trifle, and never yielded to me on a point of importance." In this single sentence is seen the secret of his success—the very germ of his great reputation. Some men mistake trifles for points of importance, and waste their time in the strenuous idleness of canvassing them. Metcalfe never made a mistake of this kind. He had a remarkable faculty of divesting great questions of all needless encumbrances, and making himself thoroughly understood. Some of his Indian State-papers are models of this massive simplicity. When, in 1825, the complication of affairs at Bhurtpore caused great doubt and

uncertainty regarding the course to be pursued by the British Government, Metcalfe in a few pithy sentences placed the whole question so clearly before the Governor-General and his councillors, that all doubt and hesitation vanished before a brief statement of the case, so plain and unsophisticated that the reader is almost tempted to exclaim that a child might have written it. But it was this very child-like directness that was so cogent an instrument in his hands. It was a pebble from the brook —the brook of truth—that brought down the gigantic Philistine.

It was this directness of purpose, too, that shaped all the external circumstances of his Indian career. From the very first he resolved that he would adhere to the political, or diplomatic, line of the public service, and from this resolution he never departed. No man of his time had a larger knowledge of the native states of India. No man knew better how to deal with the native chiefs. And no man was ever held in higher estimation by them. They respected his great qualities, though sometimes exercised to their disadvantage; and knew if his vigour were inconvenient to them, that they could confide in his justice and always rely upon his truth. He did much to elevate the British character at all the native courts; and was inwardly respected even by those whose corruption he exposed, and whose avarice he baffled.

He never indulged in any inflated talk about the wrongs of the people; but he set himself steadily at work to redress them. He was a philanthropist in nothing so little as in words. He abstained from anything like grandiloquent professions; but the practice of his life was in accordance with the purest principles of benevolence. As a member of the Government, he was generally on the side of the people; as an individual, he gave liberal encouragement to every institution that was calculated to

promote their interests. He was opposed to too much interference with the ancient usages of the people, but it was a discriminating opposition. He was eager, for example, to maintain inviolate the village communities, which he believed to be such important auxiliaries to the security and prosperity of the agricultural population; but he was willing to incur some risk, in the cause of humanity, for the suppression of the abominable rite of suttee.

It would be a mistake to endeavour to enhance the merit of Charles Metcalfe's success by saying that circumstances were hostile to him, and that he rose to eminence in spite of obstacles which would have kept down other men. The truth is, that circumstances were in his favour. I have had nothing to record of those early hardships which, a few years before Metcalfe's entrance into public life, tried, as in a furnace, the endurance of men struggling for fame and fortune. It is interesting to read or to hear of a Munro lacking the means to provide himself with a pillow or a blanket—of a Malcolm starving in secret, because he would not borrow money to buy himself a dinner—of a Tucker disputing with the rats for the possession of a miserable cellar. Metcalfe had no such trials at the outset of his career. Everything went prosperously with him from the first. When he was a boy, he wrote in his Common-place Book, among other passages, the suggestiveness of which will be better appreciated by those who turn back to them after they have followed Metcalfe's career to the end and made close acquaintance with his character—"He is the most clever who is best able to profit by good fortune when it comes to him." It was his good fortune to be the son of an East India Director, to be patronized in early life by Lord Wellesley; and always to have an influential friend at Court. By this good fortune he was well "able to profit." One Governor-General after another recognised his abilities,

and ever in the most critical conjuncture sought his assistance and advice. All, with one exception, continued to regard him, long after their official connection had been severed, with the strongest feelings of admiration and affection. To the success of every administration under which he served he largely contributed. It is not always that the impression of men's minds is stamped most indelibly on the circumstances of the times when they occupy the highest stations. It often happens, on the other hand, that their most enduring actions are those to which another's name is given in the history of the world. There are many names which more frequently occur to the annalist of our Indian Empire during the first thirty-eight years of the present century; but there is no one man who had really a larger share in shaping the events which are the staple of history, or who did more in his generation to make our Anglo-Indian Empire what it is, than Charles Theophilus Metcalfe.

CHAPTER X.

[1838—1839.]

FERN HILL.

England revisited—Metcalfe's reception—Residence at Fern Hill—Expenses of Living—Rumoured Appointment to Bombay—The Seat in Parliament—Offer of the Government of Jamaica—Farewell Entertainments—Departure for the West Indies.

In the lives of some men a long sea voyage is a blank. No period could be a blank in the life of Charles Metcalfe. So long as there were human beings around him, there was free scope for the exercise of some of his finest qualities,

> In that best portion of a good man's life,
> His little nameless, unremembered acts
> Of charity and love.

And yet they were not "unremembered." His overflowing kindness and courtesy towards all on board the *St. George*, down to the youngest sailor-boy in the ship, are still held in grateful recollection. It was continually his study to contribute to the happiness of his fellow-voyagers;* and when the passage, a brief and prosperous

* Among the passengers on board the *St. George* was Dyce Sombre, the adopted son and heir of the Begum Sumroo, who had held Metcalfe in such high estimation when he was Resident at Delhi. This gentleman had taken his passage for England in another vessel, but upon hearing that Sir Charles Metcalfe was going home in the *St. George*, he gave up his passage at a large pecuniary sacrifice, and embarked on board that vessel. After his return to England, he wrote to Lady Ashbrooke, Metcalfe's

one, was concluded, all classes addressed him, each after its kind, in language of grateful affection and respect. He gave freely to all who had rendered any assistance to himself and his dependents; and there were some, then met on board for the first time, who excited an interest in him which only ceased with his life.

Before the end of May Charles Metcalfe, after an absence of thirty-eight years, again planted his foot upon English soil. He landed at Bristol, and proceeded at once to his sister's residence, and for a little time was in the enjoyment of perfect peace.

His reception in England was all that his affectionate heart could desire. And it was all that his ambition craved. The remaining members of his own family were few; but many of his old Indian friends had preceded him to the home of their childhood, and were now eager to extend to him a hand of welcome.* Letters of affectionate congratulation on his safe return poured in from all parts of the country. Every one who had known him in the

sister, saying that, under the belief that Sir Charles could not "be so comfortable as his station in life entitled him to be, and as he (Dyce Sombre) had more than he wanted for himself, he would be too happy to make Sir Charles a loan of twenty or twenty-five thousand pounds, payable in Calcutta, to be repaid at his convenience. And for which," added the writer, "I pledge my honour that I will expect no return of any kind whatsoever." The letter in which this splendid offer was made was docketed by Metcalfe "declined with thanks."

* Among others, his old friend J. W. Sherer wrote to congratulate him on his arrival, saying, "Your declaration in Writer's-buildings, that your aim should be nothing below the Governor-Generalship, occurred to me in full force, and gave rise to many thoughts as to the purposes of Providence respecting any individual being indicated by his early bias to this or that object. You, my dear friend, have attained your object, and doubtless have long been in a condition to admit that

'He builds too low who builds below the skies.'"

East, was now eager to embrace him in the West. It was pleasant to find at least that he had not grown out of their remembrance.

He remained at Clifton till the middle of June; after which he spent a few days at Richmond with Lady Ashbrooke, and thence proceeded to the metropolis. If he had desired to renew his boyish recollections of a London season, he could not have had a better opportunity. London was in an unusual state of fashionable excitement. Preparations were then in an advanced stage of progress for the coronation of our youthful Queen. The great capital was unwontedly full; and every one was in a state of expectancy. But the spectacle over, the excitement passed away; and then he saw London and its people in their every-day costume.

From many of the leading statesmen of the day Metcalfe received marked attention. First one member of the Ministry, then another, sought his acquaintance. From several of his old masters, the Directors of the East India Company, he met with a cordial reception. But nothing gratified him so much as the renewal of personal intercourse with Lord Wellesley. Their first meeting was a remarkable one. The Duke of Wellington was with his brother, and for a while the three talked over old times, and exchanged their recollections of the many stirring military and diplomatic incidents of the first great Mahratta war.*

After some little time spent in necessary sacrifices to society, Sir Charles Metcalfe took up his abode on his

* It is source of regret that I have not been able to find any account, under Metcalfe's own hand, of this interesting meeting. He wrote all the circumstances of it to his friend and correspondent, the late Colonel John Sutherland; but I have not been able to discover what has become of the papers of that much-lamented officer.

paternal estate of Fern Hill, near Windsor. It need scarcely be added, that he was soon surrounded by his friends. He had transplanted to the woods of Berkshire the exuberant hospitality of Allipore and Garden Reach. His house was continually crowded with visitors; and he soon began to find that the repose and retirement which he sought were not within his reach.

He complained of the unsatisfactory life which he was compelled to lead at this time. It was, indeed, a strenuous idleness extremely distasteful to him. He was wasting both his time and his money on what afforded him no pleasure, and often caused him some self-reproach. In truth, he had not long occupied the family mansion before he began seriously to contemplate the expediency of breaking up his establishment, taking a smaller house, and reducing his expenditure. He was familiar with the charges attending the most princely style of living in India; but he had no conception of the expenses of a "gentleman's establishment in England." He whose purveyor had charged him for 3,000 eggs used on the occasion of a single Calcutta entertainment, stood aghast before the indefinite waste of the "servants' hall."

The career of such a man as Charles Metcalfe supplies many great lessons; but none greater than that of the true uses of wealth. He had returned to England with a moderate fortune, only a part of which had been acquired in the East. His paternal inheritance, which under skilful husbandry had been fructifying for a quarter of a century, was, I believe, the real "Pagoda-tree" which it was now his privilege to shake. And he did not like to shake it into the plush pockets of fastidious flunkeys. He could not be happy whilst he was expending his income on "what is termed living." He desired a large margin to enable him to relieve the wants of others to whom Providence had been less bountiful. Twenty-eight years before,

he had written to his aunt, Mrs. Monson, that he would "never consent to spend all his income on dinners and balls, houses, coaches, and servants." "Money," he added, "was made for better uses, and, by God's grace, I hope to apply mine to some of them."* And now that the future of which he then spake had become the present, he wrote with remarkable consistency, in the same strain, to the same beloved correspondent:

". . . . I am not sure that I shall ever see you again at Fern Hill; for I have serious thoughts of abandoning it. I must either do that, or change my mode of living. If I do the latter—that is, if I must refrain from seeing my friends, of what use is a large house and establishment to me? At present my expenditure threatens to exceed my means, or at least to absorb them so entirely, as to leave little or nothing for the best use of affluence—assistance to those in need of it."—[*Fern Hill, Nov.* 9, 1838.]

"I feel a reluctance to abandon Fern Hill which makes me hesitate. The difference would be this—Here I shall always have a struggle to keep expenditure within income, and the greatest part of my means will be spent in a wasteful manner by servants, as I do not possess the art of management, leaving little or nothing to do good to others with. Elsewhere, as I really require little for my own comfort and accommodation, I should be comparatively rich, and have much more for the use of others, which is certainly the most gratifying use of abundance. . . . . I have no prospect of coming into Parliament, but would gladly embrace any honourable opportunity of devoting the remainder of my life to the service of my country in that sphere of action."—[*Fern Hill, Jan* 6, 1839.]

"I have made up my mind to part with Fern Hill whenever I can make an arrangement for it to my satisfaction. My reasons for quitting are these:—Firstly, the expense of living here is too great; there being, in my opinion, more satisfactory and better uses for what income I have than spending it all on the mere eating and drinking of a large house and establishment. Secondly, the life is not suited to my disposition. I should like greater quiet and retirement; and the occasional enjoyment of affectionate

* *Ante*, Vol. I. page 243.

society as a treat. A continual and incessant succession of company is too much for me. Thirdly, the only remedy is flight; for neither can I reduce my establishment while I live in this house, nor can I shut my doors whilst I have accommodation for friends. Elsewhere, if I continue a private man, I can be more retired; and retirement is best suited to my nature. Elsewhere I could live, I think, with sufficient hospitality on a fourth of what I should spend here, and as I have no desire to hoard, the difference may, I trust, be made more beneficial to others than it can be whilst wasted on a lazy, discontented establishment." If I go into Parliament, which I shall do if I have an opportunity, the only alteration in my present plans will be, that I must reside for seven or eight months in London; and so far deprive myself of retirement for the sake of public duty."—[*Fern Hill, Feb.* 25, 1839.]

Idleness without leisure—obscurity without retirement—were conditions of life not likely to have many attractions for a man of Metcalfe's temperament; and before he had been long in England he began to sigh either for a hermitage or the floor of the House of Commons. Another destination, however, seems to have been fixed for him by his friends. The Government of Bombay was about to become vacant; many named him for the succession, and some suggested that he should apply for it. Among the latter was a friendly member of the Court of Directors, to whom Metcalfe wrote from Fern Hill in October:

"I thank you sincerely for your kind suggestion. I recognise in it the same friendly spirit that has, on several important occasions, taken a generous interest in my welfare. I have no hesitation in communicating to you in confidence all the sentiments that I entertain on the subject; but I do not wish the communication to go beyond yourself, not that I should affect any concealment if I were questioned, but because I do not, unasked, wish to make known any of these feelings. First, I have no intention of making any tender of my services—in other words, of asking for the appointment. I would not do that if I desired the Government of Bombay in the greatest possible degree. Second, I have no expectation that it will be offered to me; but if it were, and the offer were made on personal grounds—that is, as a favour to me, or as a compensation for the loss of the Government of the

ci-devant Presidency of Agra, I should be grateful for the compliment, but should respectfully decline the appointment, having no desire on my own account to return to the public service in India, and become again engaged in the cares of Government. Third, if the offer were made on public grounds—that is, in a manner which implied that benefit to the public interests was contemplated in my nomination, I should consider myself bound to accept it; and should do so with pride and pleasure, and devote myself to the task as long as my services might be acceptable and my health last; holding it to be every man's duty to obey the call of his country when he can do so without discredit; but in that case I should think it indispensable for my credit that I should, in another respect, be placed in the same position in which I was when I was Governor of Agra, and when I quitted India: that is, that I should be provisionally appointed to take the office of Governor-General on an accidental vacancy, not with any view to the permanent succession to that post, but merely that I might not be lower in that respect than I was during the last three or four years of my bygone service in India. I have said all this in order that you may understand fully how I feel; but I shall be surprised if I receive any offer; and I certainly shall not make any application."

The Government of Bombay was conferred on Sir James Carnac; and in November, Metcalfe wrote to his aunt:

"As a proof of the little leisure that one has for anything, this letter was commenced yesterday at Fern Hill, and stopped because I was obliged to go to dinner, and is now continued at St. George's Hotel in Albemarle-street, because I have come in to-day to dine with the Directors and meet the new Governor of Bombay, who, I am happy to say, is not myself. Had the office been offered to me in a manner that would have made it creditable to me to accept it, I might have, and should have, felt it my duty to do so; but as no offer whatever was made, my conscience is clear from any self-reproach, and I am glad that it is as it is, for I have no wish to return to India, and enter again on the cares of Government."

The cherished object of Metcalfe's ambition had long been a seat in the House of Commons. He had dreamt of it in the Eton cloisters; and talked of it at Delhi; and thought of it on board the *St. George*. It would not seem that, to a man with a high reputation and the command of

100,000*l.*, there was any great difficulty in the way of obtaining such an object as this. Indeed, he very soon found that, to become a British senator, there was little more to do than to pay the money and to take his seat. He had scarcely landed at Bristol before a letter came to him from the House of Commons, saying that he might have Maidstone for 3,000*l.* But he looked askance at this kind of trading, thought that he might come in time to represent a purer constituency, and he declined the offer. Other places were afterwards suggested to him. He was asked, in the event of a dissolution which was then expected, to stand for Beverley on the Liberal interest; but he declined, on the ground that he would not oppose his old Calcutta friend, James Weir Hogg. Then Leeds was suggested to him, with an assurance that Mr. Macaulay, whom also he would not oppose, did not purpose to present himself to the constituency of that place; but he shrank back from the thought of the large amount of solicitation that the canvass would involve. His friends, finding him, perhaps, a little intractable, were obliged to represent that, without buying or soliciting, there was small chance of his obtaining a seat in such an assembly as the House of Commons. And it was, doubtless, under the conviction of the force of such representations, that he frequently wrote, at this time, that he had no chance of obtaining a seat in Parliament.

But as the year 1839 advanced, there really appeared to be some prospect of securing a seat, without any great sacrifice of self-respect. Though neither money-payment nor solicitation could be altogether avoided, it seemed that an entrance to the House of Commons might be found without drawing largely on either the purse or the pride of the Nabob. Lord William Bentinck was then member for Glasgow. His failing health required that he should withdraw from public life; and he felt that it would be a

solace to him in his retirement, if spared to enjoy any earthly solace, to think that he had been succeeded by such a man as his old colleague. Their opinions on questions of domestic policy were nearly identical. I presume that it is right to describe Metcalfe as a "Radical." He had not been long in England before he published an anonymous pamphlet, entitled "Friendly Advice to the Conservatives,"* in which he declared himself unreservedly against Protestant ascendancy in Ireland; the continuance of corn-duties and church-rates; and the finality of the Reform Bill. With equal emphasis he pronounced his opinions in favour of vote by ballot, short parliaments, and the exclusion of the bishops from the House of Lords.† These opinions were not unlikely to recommend him to the electors of Glasgow, who had returned Lord William Bentinck to Parliament; and the support of that respected nobleman and his confidential agent was calculated also to contribute largely to Metcalfe's success.

In the spring of 1839 there was, therefore, really good prospect of his succeeding Lord William Bentinck in the representation of Glasgow; but the necessary arrangements proceeded so slowly, that the latter wrote from

* He wrote also in 1838, another pamphlet on the payment of the National Debt.

† It is right, however, to add, that Metcalfe was a member, and not a lukewarm member, of the Church of England; but he believed that universal justice was greater than an exclusive Church. "As a member of the Church of England," he wrote, "I have no wish that the Church should be injured. I yield to no one in reverence for the bishops and clergymen, or in admiration of their qualities and virtues. I am willing to contribute my share for the support of our Church in undiminished wealth and prosperity; and if any other religion were to claim over her the predominance which she asserts over others, I would do my utmost to support her against such pretensions. But justice has a higher claim than even attachment to one's own Church, and justice is against the predominance of one religion over others."

Paris, where he had been for some time residing, to say that he should be obliged to proceed to England and cut the Gordian knot by a precipitate resignation. But, alas! it was cut in another way—sadder and more certain. The mortal ailment, which had long been wearing away the life of Lord William Bentinck, made such progress, that, before the end of the spring, he lay upon his death-bed; and in the month of June he was carried to the grave.

By no one, not bound to him by the closest family ties, was this event more deeply deplored than by Sir Charles Metcalfe. "The same blow," he wrote in a letter of condolence to Lady William Bentinck, "has deprived me of one of the kindest and best of friends. Our country has lost one of its wisest statesmen and purest patriots, and the world one of the most virtuous and admirable of mankind." "I should have ventured to entreat permission," he added, "to attend to the grave the most perfect man I have ever seen, if I had known when and where the funeral would take place; but I apprehend that it was too late to make such a request when the sad intelligence reached me." Nor were these mere expressions of kindness drawn from a warm heart under the influence of a passing emotion. His sober judgment confirmed what his affectionate nature dictated. The more he had seen of Lord William Bentinck, the more he discerned, and the more he appreciated, his fine qualities. Never were two honester men knit together in bonds of the closest friendship.

But it was not until three years had passed away since the death of Lord William Bentinck, that Metcalfe altogether knew how firm a friend the departed statesman had been to him. Then, in August, 1842, Lady William Bentinck sent him a copy of a letter which in April, 1836, her husband had addressed to Lord Melbourne, the Prime Minister of the day. It contains the following passages,

which might, perhaps, have been inserted in a better place than this, but which in any place will be read with pleasure, so honourable are they both to the writer and the subject of the letter:—

"I wished very much to have said a word to you before I left London respecting the Government of Madras, from which I hear Sir Frederick Adam has desired to be relieved; but I was disappointed.

"By every feeling of regard and respect, I had felt it my duty to urge upon Sir John Hobhouse and the authorities at the India House the great claim of Sir Charles Metcalfe to that appointment. On all these points I found a ready acknowledgment of his great services and superior qualifications; but, to my grief, I found also the same general consent that his late measure on the Press was considered to counterbalance all these titles to favour and distinction, and to destroy his pretension to that preference which all seemed disposed, if this unfortunate circumstance had not occurred, to have granted him.

"I venture to implore your justice in his behalf. Let the worst possible construction be put on this act, and the motives of it, it surely ought not to cast into the shade thirty-six years' uninterrupted service in the highest appointments, in which no man ever bore a higher character for high-mindedness and unbounded liberality—for usefulness and ability.

"It seems to have been imagined that he need not have passed any law upon this subject, and that it might have been left to his successor. But this a mistake. The measure could not be delayed. Before I left India, a resolution passed Council that the Law Commission, when assembled, should propose a law having general application throughout India. Sir Charles did not think it necessary to wait for this report. I have heard that, in the despatch to Bengal, an opinion of mine is given as to the provisions which this law should contain. This is a mistake. I never recorded any precise opinion upon this point, for the simple reason that I had not formed any. Sir Charles had always the same opinions upon the Press. We in some respects differed, but upon the necessity of an immediate enactment, we should not have disagreed. I should not have waited for my successor, any more than he has done, if I had been prepared, as he was, to come at once to a conclusion. The power of legislating is in the Council of India—the necessity of exercising it existed—the right of

cancelling the acts of the local Government rests with the home authorities.

"From the applause that has been bestowed in India upon this act, it may be imagined that Sir Charles was influenced by the love of popularity, but in his public career I think no man has shown greater rectitude of conduct, or more independence of mind.

"Pray excuse this long appeal. We served together for nearly seven years. His behaviour to me was of the noblest kind. He never cavilled upon a trifle, and never yielded to me on a point of importance."

The representation of Glasgow was vacated by the death of Lord William Bentinck. But a few weeks before the occurrence of this event a circumstance occurred which turned all Metcalfe's thoughts into a new channel, and made the prospect of a seat in Parliament a more remote contingency than ever. On the 20th of June he wrote from Clifton to Mrs. Monson: "Those who have sent me to Paris or to Ireland seem to have been wrong; for the Almighty ruler of all things seems to have ordained that I am to go to Jamaica. Who would have thought of such a destination? This proposal has been made to me, most unexpectedly, of course, on my part, by Lord Normanby, Secretary of State for the Colonies, and the post being one of honour, owing to the difficulties at present besetting it and the prospect of rendering important service, I have considered it a public duty to undertake the charge, and have accepted it without a moment's hesitation. I have risen in the East, and must set in the West—not, I hope, under a cloud. It is a curious destiny. . . . . I broke up my establishment and took leave of Fern Hill on the 17th."*

It was on the 7th of June that Metcalfe's old friend,

* In April he had written to the same correspondent, from Fern Hill: "I shut up here in the beginning of June to look out for a hermitage. I find more retirement necessary for my comfort than I could ever have here."

John Elliot,* conveyed to him a message with which he had been charged by Lord Normanby, then Secretary of State for the Colonies—a message to the effect that her Majesty's Ministers would be well pleased by his acceptance of the Government of Jamaica. The offer was not a tempting one. There was everything, indeed, to deter ordinary men from taking upon themselves such an office. He was invited to brave an unhealthy climate; to administer the affairs of a disorganised Government; and to grapple with a convulsed state of society. And there were, on the other hand, to one who had been Governor-General of India, none of the common inducements to sacrifice the ease and comfort of home and the manifold privileges of private life. But Metcalfe at once accepted the offer.† He believed that he was wanted. The claims of the public service were paramount in his eyes. He would have gone anywhere—done anything under the conviction that the State required the sacrifice from him, and that it was his duty to make it.

To the Colonial Secretary, and indeed to all the Ministers of the Crown, Metcalfe's acceptance of the offer was most gratifying. Lord Normanby wrote at once to express his satisfaction at finding that one, in whose tried public character he had so much confidence, "had been induced at once to accede to the proposal." "I am sure," he added, "that it will be in every way advantageous to the great interests at stake, that the execution of this difficult task should be entrusted to such hands." The task, indeed,

* The Honourable John Elliot, member for Roxburghshire.

† The only doubt that suggested itself to him arose out of his negotiations for the representation of Glasgow; and he did not, I believe, finally accept the Jamaica Government until he was assured that nothing had been done to render him otherwise than a free agent. He had incurred, indeed, no sort of obligation, tested by the most delicate sense of honour, to take a single step further in advance.

was one of extreme difficulty; and the Ministers, who had thought only of securing the service of the fittest man to whom they could assign it, rejoiced in the thought that India had opportunely sent them a statesman so well fitted to the work.

The selection gave general satisfaction. To the members of the Indian services who claimed Metcalfe as a comrade, it was especially gratifying. They felt a common pride in the appointment; and many declared that the compliment to their profession made them think better of themselves.* To the representatives in England of West Indian interests it soon came to be equally satisfactory. If some doubts perplexed them at first, they soon learnt that Metcalfe was a man of fine temper and conciliatory manners, little likely to carry to the seat of his new Government foregone conclusions hostile to any class. They learnt that he was just the man to proceed to the distracted Western island as a messenger of peace, to soothe social animosities, and to reconcile conflicting interests. And the more they inquired into the character of the new Governor, the more reason they had to congratulate themselves on the choice.

Both were eager to testify their respect for the departing statesman. The East Indians and the West Indians alike invited him to a farewell entertainment. The former prepared their banquet at Willis's Rooms. There, on the 30th of July, Metcalfe met many of his old friends and comrades; and others who knew him only by name, but still felt a deep personal interest in his success. It was not one of the incidents of his varied life which excited least emotion at the time, or was dwelt upon afterwards with the feeblest sensations of delight. One common

* The selection of a Company's servant for the government of a Crown colony was then a much rarer event than it has since become. Perhaps I should not err if I added that its greater frequency in later days was the result of Metcalfe's success.

sentiment animated all who were present. There was never more cordiality of heart—more sincerity of utterance—at any similar entertainment. It has been said by a high authority that there were some present on that occasion who thought less of doing honour to their guest than of gratifying their own curiosity, and that some revelations of Metcalfe's intended policy in Jamaica were looked for on that night, but never came. But it may be doubted whether such a feeling was encouraged at any part of the crowded table at which his East Indian friends were assembled. Their thoughts were in the East, not in the West. They cared little about emancipated negroes and proprietors of sugar plantations. The labour question was nothing to them. Their hearts were all with Charles Metcalfe, the some-time Indian civilian.

When, however, the West Indians, headed by Lord St. Vincent, Sir Alexander Grant, and Mr. Burge, the Colonial Agent, invited the Governor of Jamaica elect to dine with them at Ellis's Hotel, it would have been strange if they had not desired some communication upon points of such vital interest and importance to the majority of those who were assembled to do him honour. Metcalfe, on such occasions, was always reserved, and beyond general expressions of a desire to reconcile all classes in Jamaica, was not likely to have been betrayed into much communicativeness on this. But the entertainment was a private one, and its incidents are not, I believe, on record.

At the East Indian dinner there were present, as I have said, many of Metcalfe's old friends and comrades—many bearing names distinguished in Indian history since the commencement of the present century.* There were

* Among others, Lord Combermere, Sir Richard Jenkins, Mr. Arthur Cole, Sir Charles Grey, Sir Charles Malcolm, and Sir Jeremiah Bryant. Mr. John Elliot, member for Roxburghshire, one of Metcalfe's oldest friends, presided.

others, too, whom circumstances prevented from being present in the flesh, but who were with the assembled party in spirit. Many letters from eminent men, deploring their compulsory non-attendance, were addressed either to the Chairman of the Dinner Committee, or to Metcalfe himself. The following letter from Lord Wellesley, which was read on the occasion, made a deep impression on all who heard it:—

LORD WELLESLEY TO D. C. SMYTH, ESQ.

"*Kingston House, Knightsbridge, July* 26, 1839.

"SIR—It would afford me sincere pleasure to accept the honour of the invitation which you have transmitted to me; but for a considerable time past, I have declined attendance on public entertainments.

"No person can concur more cordially in the laudable object of the proposed entertainment. Sir Charles Metcalfe was originally introduced into that service, of which he now is a principal ornament, under my special superintendence and care, at a very early age, at the recommendation of his highly respectable father, my steadfast friend. His progress, of high distinction and honour, I have always regarded with the warmest interest, and with the most affectionate solicitude; and the eminent station which he has attained in the estimation of the public, is not only a gratification to my sentiments of friendship, but real matter of satisfaction and pride to me.

"The respectable body of gentlemen in whose name you have addressed me, are fully capable of appreciating my feelings on this occasion; among them I recognise with pleasure many distinguished names of the fellow-students of Sir Charles Metcalfe, and of my early assistants and fellow-labourers in the Government of India; the principal stations in which by several of them were most honourably filled in the course of their career of service.

"The choice of Sir Charles Metcalfe for the arduous Government of Jamaica is most creditable to those who have named him, and I have no doubt will prove highly beneficial to the British Empire, and advantageous to the great cause of African emancipation, to which I have always been a sincere and anxious friend.

"My most ardent hopes, wishes, and confident expectations of success, honour, and glory in this congenial enterprise, will ever

attend my esteemed pupil; who, I trust, will return from the West Indies with a reputation equal to that which he so justly acquired in the East.

"I have the honour to be, sir,

"Your faithful and obedient servant,

"WELLESLEY."

Soon afterwards, Lord Wellesley wrote to Metcalfe himself in the same strain of genuine admiration:—

LORD WELLESLEY TO SIR CHARLES METCALFE.

"*Kingston House, August*, 1839.

"MY DEAR SIR CHARLES METCALFE,—Your appointment (so highly honourable to you) to the Privy Council affords me the opportunity of repeating in writing the congratulations which I have already offered to you on the very distinguished manner in which you have been called by her Majesty to the arduous and interesting duties of the Government of Jamaica. At this moment, and under all the circumstances of that Government, it is one of the most important stations in the British Empire. It is a matter of cordial joy and affectionate pride to me to witness the elevation of a personage whose great talents and virtues have been cultivated under my anxious care, and directed by my hand to the public service in India; where, having filled the first station in the Government of that vast empire with universal applause, his merits and exalted reputation have recommended him to his Sovereign and his country as the man best qualified to consummate the noblest work of humanity, justice, and piety ever attempted by any state since the foundation of civilized society. You have been called to this great charge by the free, unsolicited choice of your Sovereign; and that choice is the universal subject of approbation by the voice of her whole people: no appointment ever received an equal share of applause.

"In a letter which I had the honour of receiving from you, and which is published in my Indian despatches, you are pleased to say that you were educated in my school, and that it was the school of virtue, integrity, and honour. That school has produced much good fruit for the service of India. You are one of the most distinguished of that produce; and in your example it is a high satisfaction to me to observe, that the benefits of my institution are flow extended beyond the limits of that empire for whose good government it was founded.

"It is among the principles of advanced age to witness the successful results of early service; and if I have failed in all my other endeavours to serve the British Empire, the foundation of the College of Fort William, which has given you and others to the public service, must ever be to me the subject of satisfactory reflection.

"May your future career be as glorious as the past; and may the termination of your government be blessed by the happy settlement and orderly establishment of that interesting society which, under your wisdom and temper, will, I trust, afford an additional proof that the freedom of the people, duly regulated, is the best security for the prosperity, happiness, and peace of nations,

"Ever, my dear sir, with sincere esteem and attachment,

"Your faithful friend and obliged servant,

"WELLESLEY."

From another of Metcalfe's old masters—another retired Governor-General—there came a scarcely less flattering note of congratulation. Lord Amherst, signing himself "your old and attached colleague," wrote to him, saying that he had "seen with very sincere satisfaction that Government had selected him to fill the important post of Governor of Jamaica." "Permit me to say," he continued, "that I look upon you as a man whom any Government would be proud to see in its service; and I trust that whether you have to act under Whigs or Tories, you will receive that cordial support to which your character and services so fully entitle you." They who knew best what Metcalfe had done in the East, were the most sanguine in their anticipations of his success in the West. And yet they did not forget the extreme difference between the constitutions of his old and his new Government, and the different state of society with which he was now summoned to deal.

On the day after the banquet at the Oriental Club, Sir Charles Metcalfe had an audience at the Palace and took leave of the Queen. Lord Normanby had recommended

that he should be appointed a Privy Councillor, "as a mark of consideration for his past services, and a tribute to the importance of the office he was about to assume." The suggestion was acted upon with alacrity. It had been arranged that the *Curaçao* frigate should convey the Governor to Jamaica. He was to be accompanied by his cherished friend, Captain Higginson, who attended him as Private Secretary; and his happiness was greatly increased by the presence of the wife and children of his old associate.

In the middle of August Sir Charles Metcalfe embarked on board the *Curaçao*, and on the 25th of September, after a voyage to the happiness of which his abundant kindness and geniality had greatly contributed,* the good ship entered the Port-Royal Harbour—and on the following morning he disembarked, and proceeded to the seat of Government at Spanish Town.

* Metcalfe took no little pleasure in the society of sailors, and delighted to promote their harmless recreations. On board the *Curaçao* he participated with pleasure in their Saturday-nights' amusements, and seemed never tired of hearing Dibdin's sea-songs. On more than one occasion he delighted the officers by himself singing one of these fine old nautical ballads, which he did with great spirit and feeling. He dined with the gun-room officers every week, and on the ship's arrival at Port-Royal refused to land because he had promised to join their party on that day.

CHAPTER XI.

[1839—1841.]

THE GOVERNMENT OF JAMAICA.

Metcalfe's Arrival in Jamaica—State of feeling in the Island—The Labour Question—Stipendiary Magistrates—The Negros and the Missionaries—Opening of the Assembly—Metcalfe's Conciliatory Policy—Conduct of the Baptists—Sanitary Measures—Interference of the Imperial Government—Success of Metcalfe's Government.

On the 26th of September, 1839, Sir Charles Metcalfe assumed charge of the Government of Jamaica. On the 30th, his predecessor, Sir Lionel Smith, who had received him with the greatest kindness, and with whom he had been in the interval in constant friendly communication, embarked on board the *Serpent*, on his way to New York. At Port Henderson, the place of embarkation, and on the road leading to it, he was attended by "crowds of the emancipated population, assembled to pay their respects to the ruler in whose administration they had been made free, and who had unceasingly devoted himself to their protection. The conduct of the people was most affecting, and evinced the greatest affliction at the departure of their friend and benefactor."*

Having instituted inquiries into the feelings of the

* *Sir Charles Metcalfe to Government, October* 1, 1839, *MS. Records.* It was characteristic of Metcalfe that he should generously endeavour to do honour to his predecessor. "In addition," he added, "to the enthusiastic attachment of this class of the

Members of the General Assembly, which had been prorogued to the 8th of October, with regard to the time of their meeting, Metcalfe summoned them on the 22nd of the month. In the meanwhile, he assiduously devoted himself to the work of inquiring into and thoroughly mastering the state of parties in the island, and the general condition of all classes of the population; and he soon came to the conclusion, if anything had before been wanting to convince him of the fact, that a bitter party-spirit was at the root of all the evils which were distracting the country.*

I must pause here. Some general mention has been made of the difficulties which Metcalfe was called upon to encounter—of the convulsions which were rending society when he was invited to enter upon the Government of Jamaica. There are some readers who may

population, Sir Lionel Smith carries away with him, as far as I can at present understand, the respect of all unbiassed persons, who are sensible of the difficulties with which he has had to contend; and although a large class, who conceive themselves to have been injured by his measures, are in a state of irritation against him, the time, I have no doubt, will come when better feelings towards him will prevail among them, and his administration be remembered with the universal respect due to his honourable, upright, manly, and unflinching conduct."

* "The chief obstacle," he wrote to Government, "apparently, to the successful working of the new Government, is the bitter party-spirit which seems to exist in the island to such a degree as will render it difficult, if not impossible, to make any endeavours to conciliate any portion of the community without exciting distrust and consequent irritation in some other portion. I shall, however, regard it as my duty, first and principally, to do justice to all classes of the population as far as may depend upon me; and, secondly, to conciliate all by all means in my power. But in the latter object I have little hope of success, for it is not improbable that the attempt may dissatisfy all the conflicting parties, by not being sufficiently exclusive to be agreeable to any."—[*Sir Charles Metcalfe to Government, September* 30, 1839.]

require to be told what these difficulties and what these convulsions were. When in 1833 was passed that great act of the legislature which declared freedom to the slave in all parts of the British dominions, the new relations thus established between the proprietary and the working classes in Jamaica and elsewhere were surrounded by difficulties and perplexities which it seemed that no human wisdom could solve. There were the same estates to be cultivated, and the same labourers to cultivate them; but so many thousands of machines had suddenly been converted into men; they who had yesterday been only property, to-day became the possessors of property, masters of their own time, proprietors of their own labour, free agents to work or not to work according to their own uncontrolled impulses. A class of people, upon whose caprices the prosperity of the island depended, had thus grown up in a day. Whilst before there was but one party to the cultivation of the land—the slave-owning proprietors and their agents—there had now become two; there was one party with labour to sell, and another party with labour to buy. A great question then arose regarding the terms on which henceforth this free labour should be bought and sold in the colony.

It need scarcely be said that the object of one party was to sell their labour at the highest possible price, and of the other to buy it at the lowest. The British Legislature, on passing the Emancipation Act, had failed to afford any adequate provision against the difficulties which were likely to arise from the absence of sufficient motive to the emancipated population to become an industrious, free people, willing to enter into equitable arrangements with their old masters. But in contemplation of the losses which otherwise might be sustained by the planters, an act had been passed by which, under the name of Apprenticeship, a modified form of slavery had been continued for a time,

and compulsory labour still brought to supply the wants of the proprietary classes. This compromise, however, had been distasteful to the people of England. They had clamoured, and they had paid for, the emancipation of the negro, and they were not now going to see any new chains riveted in the place of the old. They wanted the substance, not the name of abolition. So, in time, the system of apprenticeship had become extinct, and the entire black population of Jamaica had grown into independent men.

Then the great struggle commenced. The motive to industry was wanting. In such countries as England hunger is the great motive power. In Jamaica there was sufficiency of land to enable the cultivating classes to work for themselves, and to raise, by a small expenditure of labour, produce enough to satisfy the wants of nature.* The land which they thus occupied belonged to their old masters, from whom they rented it. It might seem, therefore, that the power of ejectment might have been used as an important instrument to compel the tenant to work. But no practice of ejectment on a large scale could have been adopted without injury, and, perhaps, ultimate ruin to the proprietors, who were eager to retain by any means an exclusive interest in the labour of the people

* Under the old slavery system certain plots of ground had been granted to the negroes for their maintenance—their surplus labour being devoted to the cultivation of these provision lands; and subsequently to the passing of the Emancipation Act, they had held them by the payment of a small rent. See despatch of Sir Charles Metcalfe to Government, October 16, 1839:—"The practice which prevailed in slavery, of granting grounds to the labourers from which they derived the means of subsistence in esculents for themselves and their families, and by the sale of their surplus produce, gave a great advantage to the labourers when they acquired freedom, as it rendered them in a great degree independent of labour, and enabled them to hold out for terms." See also Lord Grey on the "Colonial Policy of Lord John Russell's Administration," vol. i. pp. 54-55.

settled on their estates, and hoped that they might eventually secure it.

Whilst, therefore, the proprietary classes, unable to find any substitute for the labour of the emancipated slaves, were compelled either to submit to their terms or suffer cultivation to be entirely suspended, the labouring classes were under no "absolute" necessity to seek employment from the proprietors. They could afford to wait, but the land could not. The game, therefore, was in their own hands. "The wages of labour," as Sir Charles Metcalfe rightly said, "had been settled more at the will of the labourer than at that of the employer." "And this," he added, "must continue to be the case until a great increase of the labouring population shall make labour cheaper; until labourers shall be made dependent on labour; or until such a number of properties shall be thrown out of cultivation by the impossibility of meeting the expense as may produce the same effect as an increase of the labouring population."

But although the proprietors, in this emergency, feared to resort to ejectment, they endeavoured to act upon the labouring classes by an arbitrary valuation of the lands upon which the negroes were located. By fixing such rents as would compel their tenants to work, in order to provide means to meet the landlord's demands, they had some means, however inadequate, of counteracting the great advantages which the labourers possessed. Connected with this assessment of the provision-grounds another device was hit upon. Instead of placing a fixed rent upon any particular house and grounds, they varied it according to the number of people occupying it. They compelled one person to pay rent for a holding already paid for by another. Even boys and girls capable of work were summoned to pay rent for sharing in the occupancy of grounds rented and paid for by their parents.

Some, who refused payment, or were incapable of paying, were cast into prison. Young modest girls and uncorrupted youths were condemned to herd with abandoned felons. A strife—natural in one sense, unnatural in another, and in all senses unholy in itself and miserable in its results—was thus engendered. And it was hard to say how peace was to be restored; how amicable relations were to be established between two classes in such a state of perilous antagonism.

Time might have done much; time might have soothed down animosities and opened men's eyes to a true sense of their own interests, to a wise conviction of the folly of continuing the contest. But there were two circumstances which widened the gulf between the contending parties. It is painful to write, that they who should have been foremost in the good work of establishing peace only fomented discord—the ministers of justice and the ministers of religion. Out of what were doubtless good intentions came only evil results. Whilst society was in this state—whilst labour and capital were openly arrayed against each other—to have left the administration of justice in the hands of the representatives of the latter, would, doubtless, have been a fatal error. It would not have been safe to rely upon an unpaid magistracy, composed principally of planters, sitting in judgment on cases where, if their own interests were not directly concerned, there were sure to be prejudices and prepossessions to warp and bias their minds. A certain number of stipendiary magistrates—many of them sent out from England—were, therefore, appointed, with the unconcealed object of protecting the emancipated population against the alleged oppression of their former masters.* Nothing could have been better than the intent of this measure.

* "The special justices, or stipendiary magistrates, were thrust among them (the proprietors) purposely to protect the apprentices

But whilst thus endeavouring to counteract the evil influence of one set of prejudices and prepossessions, another was put into continued action, and soon seemed as likely to divert the stream of justice as that which it had supplanted. The stipendiary magistrates took their seats with a strong feeling against the landed proprietors. Regarding them as tyrants and oppressors, and the emancipated negroes as a long-suffering race, whom it was a holy duty upon their part 'to protect,' it may be doubted whether they ever looked very closely at the real merits of a case in which the two parties were concerned, and suffered it to be divested in their eyes of all adventitious trappings. They protected the labouring classes; but soon the protection of one party grew into aggression against the other.

The appointment of these stipendiary magistrates gave great offence to the proprietors. And their acts soon increased the bitterness which their nomination had engendered. The island then saw the unseemly spectacle of a magistracy divided into two sections, at open war one against another.* The labouring population took advantage of the strife. They soon came to understand the additional strength which they had gained by the appointment of the stipendiary magistrates; and fortified by the knowledge that they were so supported, were little likely to moderate their demands.

against them, and with extensive powers for that purpose. Their services have been continued with similar views regarding the free labourers. These arrangements were no doubt necessary. It was scarcely possible to entrust the dispensation of justice entirely to those who were so much interested in the questions likely to arise for decision."—[*Sir Charles Metcalfe to Government, October* 16, 1839.]

* "Two parties," wrote Sir Charles Metcalfe, "hostile to each other—one party distrusted by Government and the lower orders, the other distrusted by all the aristocracy."

Thus was the bitterness of the contest enhanced by the ministers of justice. I have now to show how it was aggravated by the ministers of religion. Not by all, but by one particular section of those ministers, was this evil influence exercised. It was natural and seemly that the emancipated population should have found in our Christian missionaries guides, guardians, and friends. It was natural and seemly that these great agents of civilization and messengers of truth, whilst weaning the people from their ignorance and delivering them from their superstitions, should endeavour at the same time to promote their worldly prosperity by teaching them how to protect themselves against injustice and oppression. It was a fair presumption that the negro population, being very ignorant and uninstructed, would, left to themselves, be but little able to cope with their old employers. It is not peculiar to Jamaica that the missionaries should be charged with the offence of teaching liberated slaves the value of their free labour. The lesson is, doubtless, a serviceable one; and if the teaching be in a right spirit —if the just claims of master and of servant be balanced with a steady hand, no evil can result from such tuition. But if the teacher be prejudiced and one-sided—if he fall into the great error of making ignorant men acquainted with their rights without at the same time clearly showing them what are their duties—if he fail clearly to point out that, although the labouring classes are entitled to demand a fair price for their services, it is folly and wickedness to endeavour to extort more—if he do not inculcate the great truth that the interests of the employers and the employed are identical, and that the prosperity of the one is not to be obtained by the depression of the other—he is in reality but a wolf in sheep's clothing; not the friend, but the enemy of mankind.

That the Jamaica missionaries, as a body, conferred

great benefits, even in a social point of view, upon the emancipated population, is not to be doubted Their influence was mainly for good. But one particular section of the great missionary body exceeded their duty as ministers of religion. It was not charged against the Wesleyan, the Moravian, the Presbyterian, or the Church of England missionaries that they had gone beyond the bounds prescribed by their holy calling. But it was said of the Baptist missionaries, that they had interfered in secular affairs to an unwarrantable extent; that they entered into the disputes between the employers and the employed in an unseemly and a bitter spirit; that they turned the influence which they had acquired over the minds of the emancipated population to a bad account; that instead of soothing down existing animosities, they aggravated them; that they made war against the proprietors as vehement and unscrupulous partisans; and prepared, as a great political party, to influence the elections.

Whatever may be the real merits of the case, as between the Baptist ministers and the representatives of property in the island, there is no doubt that the conduct of the former greatly exasperated the minds of the latter. Thus protected and assisted by the stipendiary magistrates and by an influential body of missionaries, the emancipated negroes rose in their demands, and every day it became more difficult to obtain the labour necessary to the cultivation of the island estates. A great social difficulty had, indeed, arisen, from which it required all the wisdom and temper of an enlightened Government to rescue the sinking colony. But what ought to have been a source of safety was, indeed, nothing more than a source of new danger and new embarrassment. The Governor of Jamaica, Sir Lionel Smith, had seen the real emancipation of the negroes, the abolition of apprenticeship, and his sympathies were all

with the liberated slaves; whilst the General Assembly, or Parliament of the island, being mainly composed of planters, or their agents,* was necessarily more inclined to regard the rights of property than the rights of labour. Hence arose new elements of discord. The Governor and his Parliament were soon in a state of open war with each other. From one end of the island to the other there was strife and convulsion. There was nothing to calm the angry passions of men—everything to keep their minds in a continual state of irritation; everything to hasten on a crisis for which there could be no other name than revolution.

Sir Lionel Smith was a humane and an honest man; but he wanted temper and discretion. His strong convictions, in some measure the growth of prejudice, forced him to adhere to an uncompromising course of conduct utterly unsuited to the conjuncture that had arisen. The result of this conflict of authority soon took a decided shape. Before the end of 1838, the Assembly had passed a resolution to the effect that they would proceed to no other business than that which was absolutely necessary to keep faith with the public creditor, until reparation had been made to them for the violation of their rights and privileges, of which they alleged the Imperial Government had been guilty.†

* The emancipated population had not then been registered; so that the entire constituency of the island consisted of less than 2,000 voters. Sir Lionel Smith stated the number at 1,500 or 1,600.

† The immediate cause of this determination was an act of the Imperial Government, known as the West-India Prisons Bill. The resolution, which was carried by a majority of 25 to 2, contains the following words. The Assembly declared, that "having taken into mature consideration the aggressions which the British Parliament continue to make on the rights of the people of this colony, and the confusion and mischief which must result from

In this emergency, Sir Lionel Smith recommended, and the Government of Lord Melbourne were disposed to adopt, an extreme measure. They determined, with the consent of Parliament, to suspend the constitution of Jamaica. This constitution was two centuries old. Almost from the first settlement of the colony the Legislature of the island had consisted of three estates—firstly, the Crown, as represented by the Governor, or Lieutenant-Governor; secondly, a Council of no more than twelve members, nominated and removable by the Crown, and invested with both legislative and executive powers; and, thirdly, a representative Assembly, of forty-five members, elected by the freeholders of the respective parishes. This ancient constitution it was now proposed to suspend. Lord Glenelg, who soon afterwards retired from office, was at this time Colonial Minister. It devolved, therefore, on Mr. Labouchere, the Under-Secretary, to propose the measure to the House of Commons. In the month of April, 1839, after an elaborate statement of the circumstances under which such a resolution had been forced upon the responsible advisers of the Crown, he declared, "that on a general review of the whole case, her Majesty's Government were of opinion that it would be advisable to suspend the constitution of Jamaica for a limited number of years and to provide that during that interval its legislative functions should not be exercised by a Governor, a Council, and a House of Assembly, but should reside in the Governor and Council alone."

By the party that owned Sir Robert Peel as its leader

the present anomalous system of government, they have come to the determination that they will best consult their own honour, the rights of their constituents, and the peace and well-being of the colony, by abstaining from any legislative function, except such as may be necessary to preserve inviolate the faith of the island with the public creditor, until they shall be left to the free exercise of their inherent rights as British subjects."

this measure was vigorously opposed. On the second reading of the bill, it was thrown out by a majority, swollen by some seceders from the ministerial ranks. On this, Lord Melbourne resigned. Invited to form a Ministry, Peel attempted the task, but failed under the pressure of the Bed-Chamber difficulty; and the Whigs then returned to office. The Jamaica Bill was then carried through the House of Commons, but it was afterwards amended by the Lords: and the result of these long-protracted discussions was a bill, which, whilst it vested the Governor with certain unconstitutional powers, at the same time prescribed such conditions of their exercise, as it was hoped and believed would reduce them to a nullity.

But although it seemed to the Whig Ministers expedient to arm the representative of the Crown with powers to crush the hostility and contumacy of the Assembly, they earnestly desired to restore harmony to the colony, and to effect the desired object by mild and conciliatory means. In this conjuncture it appeared to them as at least an encouraging probability, that if the Imperial Government were represented in Jamaica by the right man, the measure would be of little consequence. Instead of sending out an unpopular bill, if they could contrive to send out a popular Governor, all might still go well in the colony. They looked about, therefore, for a man, and they fixed upon Sir Charles Metcalfe.

To some who were not acquainted with the character of the man, and who could refer only to a rough outline of his antecedents, the selection might not at first appear to be one of happy augury. To the people of Jamaica, as to the West-Indian proprietors in England, nothing at first was patent but the fact that the Ministers had selected a statesman who had all his life been connected with a Government in the constitution of which the representative element had no part; who had never had any dealings with

parliaments or constituencies, or habitually recognised the right of the people to interfere in affairs of State. If, then, some members of the West Indian community, who knew nothing of his character or career, were at first inclined to think that Government were sending out a despotic ruler, there was nothing strange in the supposition. But it soon melted away as the island agent, Mr. Burge, a gentleman of great zeal and ability, who had pleaded the cause of the Assembly at the bar of the House of Commons, wrote out to his employers in the colony, that he was convinced of the high character of Sir Charles Metcalfe, and that there was little fear of such a man undertaking the Government of Jamaica in any other spirit than that of kindness and conciliation.

And it soon appeared that he was right. Sir Charles Metcalfe found, as I have said, the sittings of the Assembly adjourned to the 8th of October. He summoned them to meet him on the 22nd. Already, under the influence of the cheering hopes engendered by the change of Government, were the representatives in a better temper. No doubt was entertained that they were prepared to meet him in a friendly spirit, to reciprocate the good feeling which was sure to be evinced by the new Governor, and to resume their functions. They had said, some time before, that Jamaica needed repose; and now she was in a fair way to obtain it.

It is not improbable that the unpopularity of Sir Lionel Smith helped to secure the hearty welcome with which Sir Charles Metcalfe was greeted on his first arrival in Jamaica. The newspaper press of the island declared that "every heart exulted in showing respect to the new Governor, in order to repudiate the unfounded charges of our old one." When the ceremony of swearing in took place, on the 26th of September, the streets of Spanish Town were thronged as they had never been thronged before. Every one was

eager to catch a glimpse of the new representative of the Imperial Government, and many remarked, that as his outward appearance was the very reverse of that of his predecessor, so was there good warrant in his aspect for believing that his inner qualities were equally distinct.* Sir Charles Metcalfe was not a man of a commanding presence; but there was an expression of mingled firmness and gentleness in his face which filled the colonists with encouraging expectations of his success; and the overflowing courtesy and urbanity with which, on this occasion, he received all who were introduced to him, riveted the favourable impression which his honest countenance and his kind looks had made upon their hearts.

On the 22nd of October, Sir Charles Metcalfe met the Representative Assembly in the Parliament House at Spanish Town. He had spent the interval since his arrival in assiduous endeavours to acquaint himself with the real state of the colony, and he had thought long and deeply over the terms of the opening address which he was now to deliver to the recusant Assembly. It was no easy commission that had been entrusted to him. The great strife had been between the Parliament of the colony and the Parliament of the empire; and now, as the representative of imperial power, Sir Charles Metcalfe was armed with authority virtually to suspend the constitution of the island. But although when he entered the senate-house he carried the sword with him, he not only bore it in its scabbard, but under his robes of office. The message which he was about to deliver was emphatically a message of peace. He so shaped it, that whilst maintaining the dignity and upholding the rights of the Imperial Government, he should

* It was remarked by some of the chroniclers of passing events, that there was nothing of a lean, hungry, Cassius-like look about him; but that he had the appearance of an honest English yeoman.

utter no one word that could tend to perpetuate old, or excite new, animosities in the bosom of the Colonial Legislature. "Gentlemen of the Council," he said, in a voice that indicated his deep sense of the responsibility of his position:—

"Gentlemen of the Council, Mr. Speaker, and Gentlemen of the House of Assembly,—I hail our coming together with great pleasure, in the hope and belief that we shall proceed to discharge our respective duties with hearty goodwill, and by our united endeavours be enabled in some degree to perform those services which the state of the island demands.

"It was my wish on my arrival to meet you at the earliest possible period, but I postponed the gratification of that desire, being informed that the present time would be generally the most convenient for the commencement of the session.

"Mr. Speaker, and Gentlemen of the House of Assembly,—You will, I have no doubt, grant the supplies required for the exigencies of the public service, with due regard to efficiency and economy. I am so satisfied of your readiness to do everything necessary and practicable for the general welfare, that it is only in compliance with established custom that I trouble you with any application on this part of your functions, wisely reserved by the constitution exclusively to the representatives of the people.

"Gentlemen of the Council, Mr. Speaker, and Gentlemen of the House of Assembly,—My anxiety that all past differences should be consigned to oblivion, causes me to advert to them with exceeding reluctance; but I am on the whole of opinion, that a frank and unreserved reference to our actual position will be the best mode of discharging my duty towards you on this occasion, and the most likely method of meeting your wishes and expectations.

"I shall have to lay before you an act of the imperial Legislature of our mother country, which was deemed unavoidable in consequence of resolutions passed by the House of Assembly in the three last sessions of the Legislature of this island. I do not think it requisite to call your attention to the particular provisions of that enactment, because I confidently trust that there will be no necessity for carrying them into effect.

"You are naturally anxious that your constitution should be

maintained unimpaired, and that your internal legislation should not be subject to continual subversion or interference. I sympathize with you in that feeling, and shall always be desirous of co-operating with you to that effect. Nor do I see any doubt of success, as far as is possible consistently with the connection of a colony with a mother country which has a paramount Legislature responsible for the welfare of the whole empire.

"I am here by command of our most gracious Queen, for the purpose of executing my share in the administration of this Government according to the laws and constitution of Jamaica. There is no desire on the part of her Majesty's Ministers, or the Imperial Parliament, to interfere with your legislation; and it is, I conceive, in your own power to preserve it inviolate. But for this there is, in our relative position, one unavoidable condition. We cannot legislate against the general policy established by our Sovereign and the Imperial Parliament for the government of the whole empire, of which this island forms a part. Our own island constitution, indeed, precludes the enactment of laws of that character; for it is a part of this constitution that no law can be passed without the concurrence of the Governor, or become permanent without the confirmation of the Crown; and neither the Crown nor the Governor can be expected to co-operate in the enactment of laws inconsistent with the principles by which the whole empire is regulated.

"The acts of the Imperial Legislature of late years, affecting this in common with other colonies, have arisen almost wholly from the conviction that the great measure of emancipation and freedom granted to hundreds of thousands, and eventually to countless millions of our fellow-creatures, was a work that could only be effectually, speedily, and uniformly accomplished by the interposition of the Imperial Legislature. Hence there has been a greater degree of direct legislation for the colonies, and of urgency on the local Legislatures by their respective Governors, than could probably under any other circumstances have taken place; but that great measure having been accomplished, there is no reason to expect further interference, unless our local legislation should tend to counteract or retard the full accomplishment of the benefits of emancipation and freedom.

"You must be sensible, from the conduct of the Imperial Legislature on that great question for a long series of years, that our proceedings in legislating for this island, with reference to the change that has been produced in the relations between the

landed proprietors and the agricultural labourers, will be watched with attention and anxiety, and will bring down on us that interference to which we object, if our measures be not in manifest conformity with the principles which have worked out that change in our internal condition. I see no reason to suppose that you will give cause for such interference, and none, therefore, to anticipate its occurrence.

"I cannot promise that the Imperial Parliament will not exercise its paramount authority wherever it sees fit to do so; but I can assure you, that it has no desire to interfere without necessity, and is anxious to avoid interference, and to limit its exercise, when unavoidable, within the narrowest bounds compatible with the due protection of all classes of the community in this island. It is in your power, I trust, to prevent any emergency that would require or justify such interposition: we have only to legislate for the island according to the spirit of the age, and on the principle of the perfect and equal freedom of every class of its inhabitants.

"Not only the eyes of our own country, but those of all the world are upon us; and the interests of humanity, as well as the reputation of Jamaica, are involved in our proceedings. The entire abolition of slavery, the perfect establishment of freedom, which was regarded by our country as an indispensable duty, to be performed at any cost, is watched in its operation by other nations as an interesting experiment; and by its result in this, the most wealthy and most populous country in which it has been effected by the voluntary act of the State, their future conduct with regard to the same question will probably be guided. If we make the emancipated population comfortable, contented, industrious, and thriving, and promote, as we can hardly in that case fail to do, the prosperity of Jamaica, you will not only gain for this island an enviable reputation, but will also, it is probable, lead to the eventual freedom and happiness of the incalculable multitudes who now are, or hereafter may be, doomed to bondage.

"In the session before us there will be much to occupy your attention and require your utmost exertions. There are expired laws to be re-enacted with such modifications as the change of circumstances may require; there are old laws inapplicable to our present state to be rescinded or revised; and new laws to be made, adapted to our changed condition. I need not enter into any detail on these points. Your own knowledge will indicate, better than I could, all that is necessary for the welfare of our island.

It will be my duty to bring to your notice such measures as have appeared to her Majesty's Government to be essential for the public good. It will be most satisfactory to me to find that similar measures, or such as, conceived in the same just and benevolent spirit, may be more suitable to the state of the island, originate spontaneously with you; but as you will necessarily have to deliberate on at least some of the same questions, it may be expedient that you should be put in possession of the documents relating to them at an early period of the session.

"I was about to enter on a review of the actual state of the island, and of the interesting questions which agitate our community; but I find that I should be led into a discourse too lengthy for the present occasion, and at the same time tedious to you, who are so much better informed on all the subjects, on which I could only have offered the uncertain impressions of a stranger. Those questions, nevertheless, occupy my anxious attention. I deplore the losses which property in many instances, and chiefly in the sugar plantations, is sustaining from the want of continuous or abundant labour; and I should be heartily glad if any measures could be devised to remedy this evil, consistently with the perfect freedom of the labourers, and the true principles of political economy; but this, I apprehend, must be regarded as one of those difficulties and distresses which are everywhere beyond the reach of legislation, and which only time and the operation of a sense of self-interest can subdue or repair. I trust that more cheering days are in prospect for those who now suffer. With moderate rents and fair wages; with such alterations in the system of agriculture as the want of superabundant manual labour may suggest; with an increasing population; with the extinction of distrust and acrimonious feeling, and the substitution of cordiality and attachment; we may surely hope that this beautiful country, so highly favoured by nature, will be prosperous and happy.

"Let us, then, strive, Gentlemen, with one accord, for the prosperity and happiness of Jamaica, as the great objects of our endeavours; let us promote them by all means in our power; let us encourage industry; let us cherish the population committed to our care, and do all that we can to make them virtuous and happy in their freedom; let us foster their education and religious and moral instruction, for which I am happy to learn numerous schools already exist; let us give security to property, and do equal justice to all classes; let us improve our judicial and magisterial tribunals, on which the happiness of the people so much

depends; let us furnish the means of obtaining justice to the poor as well as the rich; let us mitigate our criminal laws; let us ameliorate the state of our prisons; let us support all useful institutions for the public good; let us endeavour to increase the number of our valuable productions, enlarge our commerce, and draw forth new sources of wealth; let us put away from us all recollection of past differences with the mother country; let us cordially co-operate in the general views of the Imperial Government; let us allay our internal dissensions and cultivate universal harmony, the want of which must greatly impede our prosperity.

"I am not so sanguine as to suppose that our best exertions will be sufficient to accomplish all that is desirable, but our united labours as a Legislature, and individually by precept and example, as well as by good laws, may do much; and you, Gentlemen, will be able to do more by your influence in your respective counties and parishes. For the rest, we must rely on the good sense and good feeling of all classes of the inhabitants.

"In undertaking the trust confided to me by our most gracious Sovereign, I have been actuated by an anxious desire to render service to my country in contributing, as far as my humble ability will allow, to the welfare and happiness of this island. I cannot pretend to be secure against error in the course of my administration; but of this you may be firmly assured, that my zealous endeavours will be unceasingly exerted for the prosperity of Jamaica; and that my own happiness will be involved in the result. My heartfelt wishes and devoted efforts will, however, be of no avail without your aid. It is on your wisdom, knowledge, and experience, that I chiefly depend. On those I implicitly rely, as well as on your patriotism, and on that loyalty for which Jamaica has ever been celebrated; and in our united and honest endeavours in this work of brotherly love we may humbly hope that the blessing of the Almighty will be upon us, without which all the attempts of human frailty must be vain."

The effect of this speech was magical. The members of the Assembly gave vent to their satisfaction in a general burst of applause. But kindly as were the present feelings engendered by this soothing address, and solacing as were the hopes of the future, it was not in the power of any human statesman wholly to allay the animosities of the past. The wounds inflicted by the encroaching hand of

the Imperial Government were not yet healed. When, therefore, the House addressed the new Governor in reply to his speech, cordial as was the general substance of the response, and pacific as its intent, both towards the Crown and its representative, some expressions crept in which showed that there were many drops of bitterness at the bottom of their cup of satisfaction; and when they proceeded to pass resolutions explanatory of the grounds on which they consented to recede from their determination to suspend their functions, it was still more apparent that they had not forgotten or forgiven the injuries which they conceived had been inflicted upon them.

Of this residuary bitterness, the manifestation of which was natural and excusable (the partisans of the Assembly declared that it was commendable),* Metcalfe wisely deter-

* The colonial agent, indeed, declared that all parties in England approved of the resolutions. The following passage in Mr. Burge's letter of December, 1839, conveys his impressions of the measure in which they were received at home:—"The speech of his Excellency the Governor receives from all classes of persons unqualified approbation for its most judicious selection of its style, no less than its topics; and there is the same commendation bestowed on the very appropriate manner in which the Assembly has framed its answer to that speech. I have heard, too, from men of all parties, their recognition of the justice and propriety of the resolutions of the House, which you were pleased to transmit to me, and to which I have given every publicity. I should say the general feeling was, that those resolutions were absolutely necessary for the vindication of the character of the House, and for securing the respect of the public; that they convey nothing more than what is sufficient to obtain those objects, and that those objects could not have been obtained had the resolutions conveyed less. They will, too, materially contribute to continue in both Houses of Parliament that interest which was excited for the colony when the Jamaica question was properly taken up and understood by the Conservative and Liberal party, and the knowledge that this interest is continued in Parliament will exercise a salutary influence on the Government, by restraining the adoption

minded to take no notice. He hoped that it was the "remains of past irritation," and he was unwilling "to disturb the harmony which in other respects promised to prevail." * It is probable, too, that he believed, in his inmost heart, that all the justice and reason were not on the side of the Imperial Government; and that whatever tended to mitigate their undue inclination to interfere in the internal affairs of the colony would be advantageous to both countries. At all events, he was well content to leave the rest to the healing action of time. Metcalfe had gained the confidence of the aristocracy without sacrificing that of any other class. The white population looked upon him as a friend, and the blacks were soon made cognisant of the fact that they never had a steadier guardian of their rights, or a more zealous promoter of their interests.

As time advanced, the harmony which had been established between the representative of the Crown and the once-recusant Assembly continued steadily to increase. Anxious to remove all sources of irritation, and to keep as far as was possible in the background the old bones of contention, † Metcalfe went on from week to week, and

of a policy which might interfere with or restrict the Governor in pursuing those measures which his experience and local observation so much better qualify him to suggest."

* *Sir Charles Metcalfe to Government, Oct* 25, 1839.

† A few days after the opening of the Assembly, Metcalfe received a letter from the Colonial Office, calling his especial attention to the Prisons Act, which had been the immediate cause of the resolution of the Assembly to suspend the exercise of their functions. Metcalfe replied, that the Prisons Act was inoperative from the want of funds to carry it into effect; and added, "I need not inform your lordship that the subject is one on which much irritation has been excited. Until real good can be effected, I should think it unwise to enter into conflicts which would only serve to renew bad feeling and manifest the utter want of power in the Government. From the apparent spirit of good within the House

from month to month, continually advancing in the good opinions of the colonists. He soon began to see that considerable exaggeration had made its way at home, and that the best-informed and the shrewdest statesmen had been misled by the inflated stories of either interested or ignorant informants. He was, for example, directed to impress upon the proprietors that no return to compulsory labour would be permitted, or any further compensation allowed for its abolition. To this he quietly replied, that these positions were fully established, and that he was not aware of the existence of any unreasonable expectations of a contrary tendency. Nothing could have been more useless or more irritating than any authoritative reopening of those old wounds.

On the 19th of November, Metcalfe reported to the Imperial Government, that ever since he had assumed charge of the administration of Jamaica he had been "endeavouring to inculcate charity and harmony among the inhabitants of the island;" and that he had seen "much reason to hope that the good sense of all parties would ultimately secure these desirable results." He confessed, however, that the difficulties of the labour question were very great;* and that he could see distinctly no sufficient remedy for it except that which time would produce. It was something, however, to bring the employers and the employed to regard each other without mutual distrust; and this the soothing policy of the new Governor was gradually accomplishing. In every new letter that he wrote to the Colonial Office, he reported a progressive

of Assembly, I entertain considerable hope that the difficulties attending this great question may be surmounted."—[*October* 31, 1839.]

* These were, as I have already stated, that people will not labour without a sufficient motive, and that there was no sufficient motive in Jamaica. The want of capital was another pressing evil.

improvement in the temper of all classes. "I hope," he wrote on the 1st of December, "that party spirit is subsiding, and will gradually cease, unless it be revived by measures or accidents likely to produce irritation." And before the end of the month he reported, that "a good understanding between employers and labourers appeared to be gaining ground, and that there were fewer complaints on the part of landholders of disinclination on the part of the peasantry to work."

Among other measures which he recommended at this time for the tranquillization of the public mind, was one for the gradual reduction of the stipendiary magistracy. To the proprietary classes this institution was a perennial sore. Its sudden abolition would have filled the labouring population with despair.* But as the ranks of the magisterial corps were thinned by the death, resignation, or promotion of one after another, Metcalfe believed that it would be expedient, by not filling up the vacancies thus created, to reduce the offensive body to a point at which all opposition to its existence would cease. For himself, he said that he would be willing to carry on the administration without a single stipendiary magistrate in the island. He had faith in the good feeling of all classes, if left to

* This was asserted in very strong language by the missionaries, and Sir Charles Metcalfe did not doubt the evil effects of any precipitate change. One of the Baptist ministers wrote to Metcalfe, saying: "I know not that I ever experienced a sentiment more nearly verging upon despair respecting a dear and sacred desire of my heart, then when I lately heard the report that the stipendiary magistracy of this island is to cease. Should such be the case, it would be almost tantamount, in my apprehension, to the ruin of the staple crops of Jamaica, by driving the labourers, all desponding, writhing, and indignant, from the cane-fields; and by that means to a new emission of the gross and insane slanders of the island press against lawful, peaceful, and impartial liberty, with which expiring despotism has ever been replete."

their own unaided instincts; and he did not doubt that the administration of justice, under a wise and vigilant superintendence, might be left mainly in the hands of the local magistrates. "The local magistrates," he said, "are removable by the Governor at pleasure; and I should expect that by a watchful attention to their conduct; by working on their good feeling; by settling all doubtful points either by law, or by legal opinions, and by insisting on the administration of justice accordingly; as well as by the formation of such institutions as the Legislature of the island might be disposed to maintain for the purpose, the equitable administration of justice might be secured here, as well as elsewhere, without the continued imposition on the colony of a class of magistrates who are naturally odious to those whose influence they, in a great measure subvert." *

"A day or two before Christmas the Legislative Council

* *Sir Charles Metcalfe to Government, Dec.* 2[illegible], 1839. In another letter he wrote: "It is not by pitting the set of authorities against another, that I hope to see this colony happily governed; but by general harmony and co-operation, and by a cessation and oblivion of those distinctions which arose out of a struggle which no longer exists. I see no reason to apprehend oppression from regarding the local justices as on the same footing with the stipendiaries. There is, I am convinced, a sense of propriety and love of justice among the gentlemen of the island generally, that would support the Governor in his endeavour to secure the equitable administration of the laws in any instances of individual misconduct." On the other hand, the missionaries were asking "Where shall Government get good executors of its laws? From the gentry of Jamaica—the proprietors, overseers, book-keepers? Emphatically, *No.* For although they have been instrumental in abolishing slavery, they have never heartily repented of the crime. Morally, they are slave-holders still; and with perfect unconsciousness of guilt, they still generally exhibit in relation to the point before us the insanely contracted, proud, and partial principles of minds inveterate in iniquity, as far as the influence of the nation and the restrictions of the Government do not limit them."

and the House of Assembly adjourned for the Christmas holidays, which were to be extended to the 17th of March. The intervening season is that at which the presence of the members is greatly required on their estates. Reporting the adjournment, Metcalfe wrote to the Home Government that "the business of the session had been conducted in both branches of the Legislature with great zeal and public spirit, unremitting application and uninterrupted harmony."

The Parliament of the island being thus adjourned, the Governor set out on a tour of visitation through the island. He had much to see, much to hear, much to learn; and he made good use of his time. He pushed his inquiries into all places; he conversed freely with all people. He saw nothing through a mist of prejudice or party-spirit, but with unclouded eyes penetrated the truth. Two great facts were soon made manifest to him. The one was, that the aristocracy of the island were in a most depressed condition; that their fine estates were, in many cases, almost unproductive; and that if labour could not by some means be procured, there were few of them who would not soon be engulphed in absolute ruin. The other was, that the peasantry were in a thriving state; that they were, when not excited by blind leaders, a peaceful and well-conducted class of men; sober in the extreme; frequenters of the church; keepers of the Sabbath.* "For

* The following picture of the negro population, taken from a letter reporting the result of Metcalfe's first tour, merits insertion:—"I turn from the cheerless prospect of proprietors to a more pleasing feature in the present order of things. The thriving condition of the peasantry is very striking and gratifying. I do not suppose that any peasantry in the world have so many comforts or so much independence and enjoyment. Their behaviour is peaceable—in some respects admirable. They are fond of attending divine service, and are to be seen on the Lord's day thronging to their respective churches and chapels dressed in

these very gratifying circumstances," he said, "we are indebted to the ministers of religion, in the island, of all denominations—Church of England, Church of Scotland, Moravians, Wesleyans, Baptists; bishop, clergy, and missionaries all exert themselves, and vie with each other in amicable rivalry to do good to their fellow-creatures."

It is to be lamented that there should be anything to mar the completeness of such a picture as this. But the longer Metcalfe dwelt upon the island, and the more intimately he became acquainted with what was passing around him, the more convinced he was of the fact that the influence of the Baptist missionaries over the minds of the negro population was not wholly for good. In the ranks of English statesmen there was not one less likely to be prejudiced against that most respectable body. He had no sectarian prejudices of any kind—but apart from all general considerations, based upon his catholicity of spirit, it is matter of especial remark that in India Sir Charles Metcalfe had seen much of the Baptist missionaries, had estimated their high qualities, had largely assisted all their undertakings, and had received from them an Address expressive of their gratitude and attachment towards one who had rendered them such essential service.* There were few men for whom he entertained a higher regard than for that devoted minister, Dr. Marshman, of Serampore. He knew what was the zeal, what

good clothes, and many of them mounted on horseback. They send their children to school, and pay for their schooling. They subscribe for the erection of churches and chapels; and in the Baptist communities they not only provide the whole expense of the religious establishment, but by the amount of their contributions afford to their ministers a very respectable support. Marriage is general among the people; their morals are, I under stand, much improved, and their sobriety is remarkable."

* See *ante*, Chapter IV., pages 110—111.

the piety, what the disinterestedness of the Baptist missionary in the East, and he was prepared to find in him only the same holy characteristics in the West. But it happened that before Sir Charles Metcalfe had been many months in Jamaica, a leading Baptist minister openly declared, that though their new Governor hoped to find Jamaica a bed of roses, they would take care that every rose should have its thorns.

Metcalfe had always said, that although his Government was to be essentially one of conciliation, it would be difficult, if not impossible, to conciliate all classes. The very measures which he adopted to soothe asperities in one quarter, were likely, he knew, to aggravate them in another. Already, under his influence, were all parts of the Legislature brought into harmonious action; already was the colony fast becoming reconciled to the mother country; already was the old mistrust between the employers and the employed beginning to disappear. Such and so rapid had been the success, rather of his demeanour than of his measures, that the apparent impossibility was almost overcome. But although he had conciliated all other classes, he had failed to conciliate the Baptist missionaries. "On my taking charge of the Government," he wrote, "the course which I laid down for myself was to conciliate all parties, and by the aid of all parties to promote the happiness and welfare of Jamaica. I have reason to believe that I have succeeded, with the exception of the Baptist missionary party."

"I have naturally asked myself," he wrote in the same despatch, "why, having apparently succeeded in conciliating all other parties, I have failed with respect to that of the Baptist missionaries? I have conducted myself towards them as I have towards every other denomination of Christian ministers in the island. I have subscribed with the same readiness to their chapels and schools, when-

ever I have had an opportunity. I have not allowed the opinions which I have been forced to entertain of their political proceedings to influence my behaviour or demeanour towards them." How then did it happen that they alone appeared to regard with mistrust and aversion the new Governor of Jamaica?

Metcalfe asked himself this question, and the answer which much consideration of the whole question educed was a painful one; but he could not escape from the conclusions which were thus forcibly suggested. As the friend and protector of the labourers, hated by the landed aristocracy of the island, and at open war with the Parliament, Sir Lionel Smith had been the pet Governor of the Baptist missionaries. His removal to make way for a man who came as the avowed friend of all classes, was obnoxious to that body, and from the first they looked askance at the catholic moderation—the universal benignity of Sir Charles Metcalfe. He came among the islanders as the messenger of Peace; and of all men living, the Christian missionaries of every denomination should have chanted "Beati Pacifici!" loudest in his praise. To say that the Baptist missionaries did not desire peace, is to bring the most dreadful charge that could be brought against a minister of the Gospel. But such *was* the charge against them. And their answer was this:—They said, in effect, that there was a cry of "Peace, Peace! where there was no Peace." Literally, the following, which was addressed to Metcalfe, in all sincerity seems to have been their creed:—"Your Excellency appears to me to have two courses before you—one, eking out, as long as nature and Providence will permit, the false and heartless truce, which is called Peace by the slaveholding spirit, but fundamentally is outrageous War against God and human happiness. The other, sustaining with all your sacred power that Peace which *is* Peace—which is war direct

and ceaseless against all transgression—which has God on its side, together with human nature in all its noblest faculties—which, as far as it is carried, is the extinction of whatever is really wrong, and the restoration of everything that is useful and holy and just and good—which consists in loving God supremely and our neighbour as ourselves, without partiality and without hypocrisy." This may be described as the manifesto of a powerful section of the missionaries. Peace, as understood by the governing powers, they openly and indignantly rejected.

It is not my business to question their sincerity—to impute, as were imputed, sordid motives to them—but the violence of their behaviour, which they may have thought earnestness in a righteous cause, is to be both deplored and condemned. If it were their duty to render to God the things that are God's, it was also their duty to render to Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's; if it were their duty to fear God, it was also their duty to honour the king, in the person of his representative; if they were so eager to do their duty to their neighbour, how came they to forget to live in charity with all men? God's mandate to man is not to love his neighbours of one class or one complexion, but to love his neighbours of all classes and all complexions. The Baptist missionaries may have been earnest, zealous, sincere, disinterested, full of love of God and love of Man; but they were but blind guides to the people; they saw their Christian duties darkly through a glass of prejudice and error, and only perpetuated the evil which they were eager to destroy.

To say that the Baptist missionaries viewed with strong feelings of dislike the conciliatory policy of Sir Charles Metcalfe, is only to interpret their actions in accordance with the explanation afforded by their own words. They never loved him from the first. They thought, or pretended to think, that he was not the friend of the negro

population, because he was not the unsparing enemy of their old masters. And soon their smouldering feelings of anger broke out into a blaze. A despatch, written by Sir Charles Metcalfe on the 16th of October, stating the results, up to that point, of his inquiries into the condition of the island, had been published by the Home Government in a collection of papers presented to Parliament. In this despatch the new Governor had stated, in very mild and moderate language, what was the information he had obtained relative to the influence exercised by the missionaries over the minds of the emancipated population, and what were its practical results. He said that, although all denominations of missionaries had done much good, the Baptists alone had done any harm, by keeping alive animosities that it was desirable to deaden, by taking part in the strife of politics, and endeavouring to turn the influence obtained as ministers of the Gospel to their uses as political partisans.

This despatch, printed at full length, soon came back to Jamaica in a Blue Book. The Baptist missionaries read it; and from that time their anger against Sir Charles Metcalfe was extreme. He was denounced from the pulpit on the Sabbath; he was vituperated on week-days in public places, as the enemy of the negro population—the enemy of universal liberty. Public meetings were held, at which the acts of the Government were denounced as tyrannical and oppressive by excited orators; and resolutions of an inflammatory character, little understood by the majority, were framed and adopted. It was the constant theme of the Baptist ministers that they, and they only, were the friends of the emancipated population—that all others were the oppressors of the negro race—that no justice was to be obtained in the colony—that wherever the prostrate people turned their eyes there was nothing but blank despair.

Such teachings as these bore in time the accustomed fruit. The coloured people, having unlimited confidence in their pastors, believed all that was said of the oppression of their employers and the tyranny of the Government; and were soon ripe for violence and outrage. Sir Charles Metcalfe had determined not to interfere with their meetings—not to notice their language. He could only suppress these assemblies by force, and the remedy, he said, "would be worse than the disease." "It is infinitely better," he added, "to let them pursue their course unmolested, and, as far as possible, unnoticed." But although he said that he might treat all the denunciatory language levelled against himself as a farce, he could not help regarding the conduct of the missionaries with the deepest concern, on account of the evil effect that it wrought on the minds of the negro population. "I am bound by my duty," he wrote to the Colonial Secretary, "to inform your lordship, that in my opinion the worst evil which hangs with a menacing aspect over the destinies of this island, is the influence exercised with baneful effect by the majority of the Baptist missionaries. It is the worst, because it is the most irremediable. Other evils and difficulties may yield to time, which may also diminish the influence of the Baptist missionaries, or produce successors of a more Christian character; but long after their influence has ceased, its pernicious effect on the disposition of the people will remain. I entirely renounce the opinion which I at one time entertained, that they had done more good than harm. The good that they have done would have been done without them. The evil is exclusively their own."*

June 15, 1840. In this despatch Sir C. Metcalfe says. "I have known Baptist missionaries in the East Indies for a long series of years, who were constantly employed in doing good. There is one in this island against whom I have never heard a word of reproach, and there may be more equally meritorious. I speak in

When, as Governor of a West-Indian colony, thus bearded by a handful of Baptist missionaries—thus acknowledging how helpless was all his wisdom and all his power to deal with their measureless indiscretions and to silence their rebellious tongues—if the thoughts of Charles Metcalfe went back, as doubtless they did, to those old days when, in an East Indian settlement, he had seen how easily a British Governor brushed away all such annoyances even before they had occurred—when Baptist missionaries, in anticipation of indiscretions which they were never likely to commit, were not even suffered to locate themselves on British-Indian soil—verily he must have dwelt, with something of wonder, on the mighty difference between the East and the West; and if he were sometimes sceptical (as I do not say that he was) of the advantages of constitutional government in a settlement inhabited by different races of men, it ought not, perhaps, to be regarded as a sign of amazing folly or despotism of the deepest dye.

Sir Charles Metcalfe was sneered at as an "Indian Governor," but he had not transplanted any despotic habits from the East to the West. In the difficult conjuncture which had now risen, his conduct was peculiarly forbearing. Perhaps advantage was taken of this forbearance. Assuredly the teachings of the missionaries bore, in due season, as I have said, the accustomed fruit; and soon it became Metcalfe's duty to report that two serious disturbances had occurred—one at Lucea, the other at Falmouth. In the latter, both the police and the military were pelted by the mob, and many of them wounded by the missiles discharged by the excited populace. The

reprobation of those only who brandish the torch of discord, instead of performing the part of true ministers of the Gospel, and guiding their people in the paths of peace prescribed by our meek and blessed Saviour."

Riot Act was read. The troops, who had acted with wonderful forbearance, were drawn up in line, and received the word to load. Upon this, the rioters dispersed. But the fever of excitement was not soon allayed. The most unseemly language, denunciatory of all constituted authority, was freely used; the Baptist missionary who had been the fomenter of the strife being the most unscrupulous in his utterances. "If I had known your errand," said the man of peace to the police-inspector who had entered the house in the execution of his duty, "I would have kicked you down the steps."*

A magisterial investigation into these proceedings was held, and some of the principal rioters, including a relative of the missionary, were committed for trial. The missionary himself was afterwards added to the list by the Crown prosecutor, on the strength of the evidence adduced before the magistrates, and a true bill was found against him. The indictment, however, both against himself and his relative, was subsequently quashed, on the ground of an antecedent illegality. The rioters were found guilty, and sentenced to short periods of imprisonment. Metcalfe was anxious that their punishment should be lenient, and would not have been sorry if some of them had escaped. He was not without a hope that the effect of these proceedings, however lamentable in themselves, would on the whole be beneficial to the colony, "by showing to the people that they incur responsibility by such outrageous conduct as was manifested on this occasion."

To one so anxious as Sir Charles Metcalfe to conciliate all classes of the community—so eager to establish universal peace from one end of the colony to another—the existence of these animosities was a source of continuous pain. It was the one black cloud that marred the universal tran-

* This man (Mr. Ward) was not an agent of the Baptist Missionary *Society*.

quillity which he had striven to restore to the beautiful island he had been commissioned to govern. But, on the other hand, there were many great compensations. The longer he continued to preside over the Government of Jamaica, the more obvious were the good effects of his conciliatory policy. He never met or parted from the Representative Assembly, at the beginning or close of a session, without congratulating them, in all sincerity, upon the harmony which regulated all the proceedings of the Island Legislature. Nor was this harmony secured by any weak or unwise concessions, by any yielding of his own opinions, or any sacrifice of the dignity of the Crown. He sometimes differed from the other estates, and in the rightful exercise of his prerogative amended their legislation; but he did it in a manner so friendly and conciliatory, that his opposition gave no offence. He always gave the Assembly credit for good intentions; and, standing between the local Legislature and the Imperial Government, exerted himself, and with good success, to reconcile one to the other; to reduce the amount of antagonism between them, if he could; and if not, to disarm it of its sting. He saw the evil of too much interference on the part of the Imperial Government, and he exerted himself, by representations not unjust because not unfavourable, to induce the Colonial-office to look with more confidence upon the proceedings of the Jamaica Parliament. He saw the danger of provoking a new contest with that body; and he conceived it to be his duty to warn the Minister of the frightful results that would probably attend another collision. "It is easy," he said on one occasion, after speaking of these dangers, "by a single false step to tumble into a difficulty; but it is not so easy to get out of it. And when the two giants, Privilege and Prerogative, have been roused to a combat, it is hard to say where it will terminate."

It would take long to tell, if the telling were appropriate

in such a work as this, what were the acts of the local Legislature during the two years which saw Sir Charles Metcalfe at the head of the Government of Jamaica. But there are one or two measures peculiarly identified with the Governor himself, of which brief mention may be made, as illustrating the characteristic humanity of the man. He was very anxious to mitigate the severity of the criminal code of the island. Many of the old statute-laws of England, making minor offences capital, remained unrepealed in the Jamaica code; and it was the custom to pass sentence of death with a prodigality which would have been perfectly frightful, if commutation had not generally followed as a matter of course. Against the continuance of a state of things which was either a contemptible absurdity or a hideous deformity, he eagerly remonstrated. It was, he said, preposterous to leave the punishment of so vast a number of criminals to the Governor, who was not present at their trial, and who was not supposed to be acquainted with the merits of the different cases thus finally brought before him. The power of life and death thus transferred to the Governor might, under some circumstances, be dangerously abused; and, under any circumstances, Metcalfe was of opinion that the sanguinary criminal laws which still formed the code of Jamaica, whether operative or inoperative, were still a disgrace to the island.

Another measure of which mention should be made in this place, is one which evinces Metcalfe's regard for the welfare of that great class of fellow-men who wear the uniform and fight the battles of the country. By the European soldiers sent to garrison the island, Jamaica had always been regarded as a vast grave-yard. Such, at times, has been the terrible mortality among them, that it is on record that of a newly-arrived regiment of 800 men, two-thirds have been destroyed by pestilence in the course

of a fortnight.* There are climates of all kinds in Jamaica—the healthiest and the most deadly. The latter, in all parts of the world, are usually selected for the location of our British soldiers; and these being within the limits of the island pestilential low lands, continued residence in which was almost certain death, they were selected for the site of our principal barracks. Year after year the results of the selection exhibited little variation. In the year 1840, Sir William Gomm, who then commanded the forces in Jamaica, wrote to Sir Charles Metcalfe that the flower of H.M.'s 82nd Regiment had recently been swept down *en masse* by a sudden "blast of disease." All the healthiest and the steadiest young men in the corps had perished, whilst the old drunkards had generally survived.

Sir Charles Metcalfe, who had given considerable attention to the subject of medical topography in India, and had steadfastly promoted the sanitary measures which his friend, Mr. J. R. Martin, had originated, regarded with the deepest interest this question of the location of the troops. When not compelled by public business, he always dwelt upon the hills, in a pleasant country-house called Highgate, where he enjoyed both health and retirement.† He knew, therefore, that there were good climates in the island; and he saw no reason why a British force should not be preserved as carefully as a British Governor. So he entered heart and soul into a great effort to secure the location of

* See Colonel Tulloch's Reports.

† Of the climate of the mountains he wrote to Mr. Martin: "We enjoy in our country-residence on the mountains, strange to say, in Jamaica, a climate that cannot be surpassed for pleasantness in any part of the world—and I should think not for healthiness either. If deficient in anything, it is in bracing cold, of which we have but little. The thermometer ranges generally from 65° to 75° all the year round. Great heat is unknown."—See also Metcalfe's private letters, quoted in the succeeding chapter.

our troops on those parts of the island in which death was not a necessary condition of residence in barracks.

I believe that I should err if I were to attribute to Sir Charles Metcalfe the exclusive merit of initiating this important movement. He was instructed by the Home Government to institute inquiries into the subject, or rather to assist the military authorities in such an inquiry. It is to the honour of Sir William Gomm that he did his part of the work with remarkable earnestness and zeal. He was in continual correspondence with the Governor—with whom in all cases he co-operated with extreme cordiality—upon a subject which, it is obvious, lay very near to his heart. And the result of their conjoint efforts was, that whereas it had formerly taken seven years and a half to destroy a thousand men, it now takes forty-five years to send the same number of men to their graves.*

In a matter affecting the lives of so many men entitled to the tenderest solicitude of the authorities, both Sir Charles Metcalfe and Sir William Gomm felt that it was

* It happened that there was already one healthy station at Maroon Town, in the mountains on the north side of the island; whilst the others were on the south side, in the neighbourhood of Kingston. When, in 1840, the sudden pestilence which destroyed so many men of the 82nd Regiment, broke over Kingston and the neighbourhood, the troops in the Maroon Town barracks continued in perfect health. Subsequently, on the earnest recommendation of Sir Charles Metcalfe, the troops were removed from the low lands near Kingston to the Port-Royal Hills. Recommending these measures, Metcalfe wrote: "The expense that must be incurred to carry them into effect is of no sufficient consideration in comparison with the health of the troops. . . . . If the island should not be able to defray the expense, I hope that the plan will not on that account be abandoned, and that the arrangement may be made complete by having barracks built in a healthy position for both of the European regiments on the south side of the island."—[*Sir Charles Metcalfe to Government, April* 14, 1840.]

of importance to act with promptitude; and the latter, therefore, recommended that, pending a reference to Government on the subject of a proposed purchase of land for the erection of barracks on the hills, an initial experiment should be made. Metcalfe at once grasped the proposal. In the cause of humanity he was not one to shrink from any responsibility. He sanctioned, by way of experiment, the erection of a building for the accommodation of 100 men, on a piece of ground rented, with option of purchase, for the purpose; and characteristically intimated to the Home Government, that, "having sanctioned the temporary arrangement on his own responsibility, he was prepared to regard the expense as chargeable to himself personally, if the arrangement should not meet with approbation." "I have considered," he added, "the health of the troops as too important to allow me to hesitate in incurring this risk." *

To dwell upon the general kindness and humanity of such a man would be mere impertinence. That it should have been ever questioned,—that it should have been supposed that his sympathies were not with the many, and that the happiness of the negro population, the great masses of Jamaica, did not lie very near to his heart, is only to be accounted for on the hypothesis that men are not always credited for philanthropy of which they do not make a great verbal display. It is true that Metcalfe did not think it necessary to write elaborate despatches to demonstrate that Freedom is a better state than Slavery, or make grandiloquent speeches in praise of "Civil and Religious Liberty all over the World." There were certain settled points on which he regarded it almost as an insult to the understandings of his official correspondents to enlarge. He considered that the absolute freedom of all

* *Sir Charles Metcalfe to Government, January* 8, 1841.

classes of the colonial community was one of these settled points; and he did not, therefore, in so many words, assure the Colonial Minister that he had no intention of permitting a return to compulsory labour in any shape or under any name. But either because he was chary of such platitudes, or because he was not continually at war with the Assembly—and the Assembly were regarded as the enemies and the oppressors of the coloured race—a suspicion that he was not well-disposed to preserve inviolate the freedom of the emancipated slaves seems to have gained ground at the Colonial Office, and to have been adopted in other quarters. But Metcalfe truly said that it was a prejudice and a delusion; and when, on the opening of the session, in 1841, he addressed the Assembly, he publicly repudiated the injurious supposition in the following words:

"All who are acquainted with the state of this island must know that there is no more fear of a return of slavery in Jamaica, than there is of its establishment in England; that our emancipated population are as free, as independent in their conduct, as well-conditioned, as much in the enjoyment of abundance, and as strongly sensible of the blessings of liberty, as any that we know of in any country. And every one who reflects must be aware, that in a land where the demand for labour is pressing and the supply inadequate; where the people have in most parts means of support which preclude the necessity of continuous labour; where the desire to live at ease may to a considerable extent be gratified; and where uncultivated and fertile land is abundant and procurable at little cost, positive coercion is in the nature of things impossible; and that the virtual coercion which in all countries is imposed by the necessities of the labouring man, is likely to be less here than in any part of the United Kingdom. To these advantages may be added, that all disqualifications and distinctions on account of colour have ceased; that men of all colours have equal rights in the law, and an equal footing in society; and that every man's position is settled by the same circumstances which regulate that point in other free countries where no difference of colour exists; that civil and religious liberty is

universally enjoyed in as great a degree as in the mother country; and that we have a press as free as any in the world. Such is the present condition of this colony in all those respects; and it may be asserted, without fear of denial, that the former slaves of Jamaica are now as secure in all social rights as free-born Britons. Let it be our study, gentlemen, to confirm, and, if possible, improve this happy state."

Sir Charles Metcalfe had made up his mind regarding the course of policy which it became him to pursue; and he never deviated from it. His object was to secure the permanent prosperity of all classes, and he knew that the first step towards this was the tranquillization of the public mind. He desired to replace mistrust by confidence, not in the breast of one class, but of all classes. Too much harm had already been done by partisanship—by the assumption that the interests of the negro alone required protection. He had seen much and heard much, during his island tour in the spring of 1340, from the negroes themselves, whom he had freely invited to meet him and declare their grievances, to convince him that any open espousal of the cause of one party would be most injurious to the happiness of all. He determined, therefore, to go about his good work in his own way, and he called upon the Imperial Government to give him their confidence and support. They told him to protect the interests of the great mass of the people: and he answered:

"In the concluding remarks of your lordship's despatch on the duty of affording protection to those classes of the Queen's subjects who constitute the great majority of the population of Jamaica, I beg leave to express my entire concurrence. No person in the world can be more sensible of the weight of that obligation than the governor who, in addition to the calls of humanity and public duty, has the further motive that his reputation depends on the fulfilment of that purpose. The only question is, how it can best be accomplished—whether by riding roughshod over the island institutions, and knocking down right and left everything that stands in one's way; or by cordially co-operating with the island

authorities, legislative and executive, profiting by their good feelings, taking them by the hand and leading them gently to every desired improvement, respecting their just rights as well as those of others, and above all, by not suspecting and distrusting them. The latter is the course which naturally presented itself to me, and if your lordship allows me to proceed in it, I will answer for this decidedly, that the people shall be efficiently protected; and if I cannot answer for everything else, I will candidly apprise you whenever I see reason to anticipate a failure; and I confidently trust that in the mean time no harm will have happened from the experiment.

"Applying the question to legislation, I would say that I know no limit to the improvement in our legislation that might be effected by gentle means. If your lordship would send me the most perfect code of laws in the world, securing in the utmost degree the liberty and protection of the subject, I could almost engage that it should be adopted as the code of Jamaica; and I would say the same as to any amendments of our existing laws that can be suggested, provided that they come recommended purely as improvements; but if the impression be produced, however mistaken, that our well-meant, albeit imperfect, legislation is received with suspicion and distrust, examined with a censorious spirit, rejected, and hurled back on us branded with the opprobrium of designed injustice and oppression; that which is deemed good and just law for the free people of England is reprobated as the reverse, because it is enacted in Jamaica; that affection and care are entertained for only one class, and that all others are regarded with injurious prejudice; then disgust must arise, which would be followed by disaffection and its consequences. The island could only in that case be governed by the main force and coercion of the mother country. The cordial co-operation of the Island Legislature and constituency would be at an end. I am in this description only endeavouring to point out the opposite working and effects of different systems; and by inference the consequences to be expected according to the inclination which your lordship's measures may seem to have towards the one or the other. I am sure that your lordship's intentions are both just and generous, but much, it appears to me, depends on the way in which the most generous designs are pursued."

It would be difficult to describe more distinctly the policy in accordance with which Metcalfe endeavoured, and

with such remarkable success, to tranquillise the troubled waters of Jamaica life. The longer he remained on the island, the more apparent it became to him that the negro population required to be reminded of their rights much less than of their obligations. Instead of being an abject and obsequious race of men, he found that they were peculiarly unmindful of what they owed to constituted authority.* There was no fear of their not asserting their privileges, as free men, and maintaining them to the utmost, even by demonstrations of force. He knew that so long as he was acting in harmony with the Assembly, there was little fear of the proprietors committing any excesses against the labouring classes. He taught the former that their best policy was conciliation; their best interest, peace; and he taught the latter the same great

* A remarkable illustration of this disregard of authority was supplied by the circumstance of a riot in Kingston during the Christmas of 1841. It appears that at this period of the year the negroes had been in the habit, during their time of slavery, of getting up certain saturnalia—of dancing, and drumming, and singing, and masquerading through the public streets. This had been rather encouraged by the masters, as a vent for that superfluous energy which might otherwise have been turned into dangerous channels. It seems, however, that in later years the inhabitants of Kingston had conceived that the free negroes might abandon this remnant of their old bondage and barbarism, and had complained of the inconvenience of the custom. Upon this the mayor, a rash and wrong-headed man, took it upon himself violently to suppress the revels of the people by the agency of the police. The consequence was, that the mob rose *en masse* against the constituted authorities. The mayor fled for his life. The military were called out. The commander of the forces issued a proclamation in the name of the Governor; and although the riot was quelled, it was long before the public excitement was allayed. The conduct of the mayor was severely condemned by Metcalfe. But for the presence of a strong military force at Kingston, the disturbance might have ended in a general insurrection of the negro population.

lesson. And no one on that island, who was not interested in the perpetuation of discord, denied that he had drawn the labouring classes and their employers nearer to each other than they had ever been drawn before. "A small but virulent party here," he wrote in October, 1840, to Sir Richard Jenkins, "whose sentiments are adopted by a larger party at home, cannot persuade themselves that the contest has ceased; or that it is compatible with their interests that it should cease; and continue to carry it on very uselessly, and by its effect on their negro flocks perniciously; but this bar to harmony will, I hope, in time, wear away, and leave all in peace and good-will."

Nor were these anticipations falsified by the result. Throughout the year 1840, frequent had been Metcalfe's complaints of the irritating conduct of the Baptist missionaries. Throughout the year 1841, his despatches are almost silent on the subject. Indeed, the first few months of his residence on the West-India island left little for him to do towards the great work of universal reconciliation. Time did all the rest; and as time advanced, Metcalfe went steadily on still in harmony with the Colonial Legislature, sometimes originating, sometimes amending local enactments; and always devoting himself to the public business with a laborious earnestness almost without a parallel in the history of colonial government.

In estimating the amount of his labours at this time, it is not to be forgotten that he was Chancellor as well as Governor of Jamaica. At certain seasons of the year it was his business to preside in the Court of Chancery. He had less judicial experience than most men trained in the Civil Service of the East India Company. But he carried to his work an inflexible impartiality, a large store of common sense, and an extensive knowledge of mankind. Such attributes as these may not be sufficient to make a Chancellor. But I believe that Metcalfe's decrees gave

general satisfaction both to the Bar and their clients. He is said by those who knew him best to have taken very great interest in this part of his business. He was indefatigable in his attention to it; and there were few things which he strove more resolutely to prevent than the accumulation of cases on his file. He used to boast, in a playful manner, that in one sense at least he was an excellent Chancellor, for he never suffered his business to fall in arrears. The judgments which he delivered were prompt; and, perhaps, there would not have been more justice in them if he had spent his best days in the Inns of Court.

It would be folly not to estimate at their true value the advantages of legal training. The Governor of Jamaica, who might to-day be a luxurious nobleman and to-morrow an irritable soldier, was obviously not the proper functionary to undertake such business as Metcalfe was called upon to perform, however efficiently he may have performed it. Among other measures of law reform for which his administration was celebrated, was one for the appointment of a Vice-Chancellor—a competent lawyer, to whom thenceforth the real judicial business of the Court was to be entrusted. There was nothing, indeed, which occupied so much of the time of the Legislature, and of the thoughts of the Governor, as measures for the improvement of the administration of justice in all its branches. I have already spoken of Metcalfe's efforts to mitigate the severity of the criminal code of the island. The subject of prison discipline was one much pondered and discussed at this time. It may be mentioned, too, that he was very desirous to keep down litigation, and the animosities it engenders, by all reasonable means. To this end he proposed, as an useful local institution, the establishment of Courts of Arbitration, or, as he called them, Courts of Reconciliation, under which certain cases, especially those between master

and servant, might be adjudicated by umpires selected by the parties. But as their awards were not to be final, these courts had the inherent defect of all systems of arbitration, that they very often, like Chaos, only more embroil the affray.

Before the end of 1841, Metcalfe believed that his work was done—that the objects for which he had consented to forego the delights of ease and retirement in his native country had been achieved. So he wrote to the Colonial Secretary, requesting him to obtain from her Majesty permission to retire from the Government of Jamaica. The Conservatives were at this time dominant in Downing-street. Sir Robert Peel was at the Treasury; Lord Stanley was at the head of the Colonial Office. Sir Charles Metcalfe was a Whig—and something more than a Whig. But little as his sentiments were in accordance with those of the men then in office on any great question of domestic policy, he saw no reason to think that the colonies would be worse governed by them than by their predecessors. Indeed, there were some points in connection with the state of affairs in Jamaica regarding which he was less likely to differ from the Conservatives than from the Whigs. He was, indeed, very anxious at this time that it should not be supposed that his resignation of the Government was in any way hastened by the change of Ministry at home.

In his private letters written throughout the years 1840 and 1841, Metcalfe had often spoke of his contemplated retirement; and the one unvarying formula which he used was this—"My departure is fixed for the time when either I can do no good by remaining, or I can go without fear of doing harm." In November, 1841, Metcalfe believed that that time had come.

"When the offer of the Governorship of this island and its dependencies was conveyed to me," he wrote to the Colonial Secretary, "my only inducement in accepting it

was the hope of rendering some service to my country by becoming instrumental in the reconciliation of the colony to the mother country. That object was accomplished soon after my arrival by the good sense and good feeling of the colonists, who readily and cordially met the conciliatory disposition which it was my duty to evince towards them. The next subject which attracted my attention was the unsatisfactory feeling of the labouring population towards their employers. This has naturally subsided into a state more consistent with the relations of the parties, and there is no longer any ground of anxiety on that account. Other dissensions in the community, which grew out of preceding circumstances, have either entirely, or in a great degree, ceased, and order and harmony, with exceptions which will occasionally occur in every state of society, may be said to prevail."* His mission of peace had, therefore, been fulfilled; and he believed that, without any sacrifice of duty, he might now retire again into private life.

His resignation was accepted with unfeigned regret. The Colonial Secretary intimated that he was commanded

* He spoke also of the extensive law reforms which had been instituted during his administration, and concluded by saying: "It is far from my intention to represent that there is not ample and noble employment left for my successors. There is a great field for continual improvement. The country has vast resources yet undeveloped. A larger population of Africans for labour in the Lowlands is requisite; and the establishment of a population of Europeans in the Highlands is highly desirable. Capital, which in despair of adequate profit has been withdrawn, will require increasing enterprise and success to tempt it to resort hither. To secure and maintain the affection of the colony towards the mother country; to promote the welfare and prosperity of the island, and the happiness of its inhabitants, will form a task of high interest and importance—the progress of which cannot fail to be attended with heartfelt gratification; but its perfect fulfilment can only be the work of time."

to convey to Sir Charles Metcalfe the "expression of her Majesty's high approbation of the ability and judgment with which he had performed the important duties entrusted to him." "I have derived," said Lord Stanley, "great pleasure from the improved and generally satisfactory report of the colony which you were enabled to transmit in your despatch of the 1st of November; and I am only doing you justice in acknowledging most willingly how much this state of things is to be attributed to your able and judicious administration."

The two great standing evils of a want of labour and a want of capital, which Metcalfe was compelled to leave behind him—evils which he had done his best to mitigate, by encouraging immigration, and promoting the development of those colonial resources which least required the labour of man for their production—he hoped and believed would yield to the action of time. They would yield, he thought, because peace had been established—because there was no longer social convulsion from one end of the island to another; because confidence had been restored between classes long severed, and good-will implanted in the breasts of men once torn by the worst passions of mankind.

But although he was compelled to leave evils behind him, he felt assured that he would leave no enemies. Even the missionaries, who had opposed him at the outset of his career, had come to understand him better; and Metcalfe rejoiced in his inmost heart to see the many fine qualities of the men no longer obscured, and their high and holy calling no longer degraded by inveterate party-prejudices, which, although they may have been the growth of charity and humanity, had become uncharitable in their manifestations, and inhuman in their results.*

* I would wish it to be understood that the remarks made in this chapter on the conduct of the Baptist missionaries in Jamaica

To give a summary of Sir Charles Metcalfe's Government of Jamaica, at the close of a chapter which is itself little more than a summary, would be only to repeat, with slight verbal alteration, what I have already written. In the history of Colonial Administration it is almost without a parallel. He had reconciled the colony with the mother country; he had reconciled all classes of colonial society; and whilst he had won the approbation of his Sovereign, he had carried with him, also, the hearts of the people. And it was truly said of him, by men who had watched with the deepest interest his continued success, that the influence of his high qualities would not be confined to the age and country in which they were exercised, but would have an abiding effect on Colonial Administration in all places and in all time.

(a subject which I would have avoided, if such avoidance had been possible), are not intended to apply to the entire body. Whether the majority were implicated in the proceedings which I have narrated I am unable to determine. Metcalfe himself thought that they were, but he was eager to admit that there were some commendable exceptions, and to bear testimony to the admirable character of the Baptist missionaries in other parts of the world.

CHAPTER XII.

[1839—1842.]

PRIVATE LIFE IN JAMAICA.

Metcalfe's Private Correspondence—Letters to Mrs. Monson and Mrs. Smythe—Yearnings after Home—Preparations for Departure—Regrets of the Island—Farewell Addresses—Parting Gifts—Final Departure.

Whilst following the statesman in his triumphant career of beneficence on this new theatre of action, I have scarcely turned aside to speak of the man. His private correspondence at this time is, however, full of interest. It dwells upon his domestic habits; occasionally touches on public affairs; affords glimpses of the feelings with which he regarded the future; and speaks of the way of life which he had mapped out for himself on his return to England. Some passages from his letters to his aunt, Mrs. Monson, and his sister, Mrs. Smythe, given in this place, will keep up the narrative of his private history better than anything I can write about it:—

"I write this from my country residence in the mountains, to which I retreat whenever public business will permit, which happens at present for two or three days in the week. The climate of Spanish Town, or more correctly St. Iago de la Vega, is extremely hot—as hot as that of Calcutta in the hot season, without any pretensions to the same degree of cold in the cold season. Spanish Town, as it is commonly called, is our capital, where the Parliament of the island meets, where my Court of Chancery, for I am Chancellor here, is held, and where generally public business is performed, excepting what is done by written orders, which can be executed here better than there. I am,

however, necessarily chiefly at Spanish Town, and can only come here when circumstances will allow. Here—I mean in the mountains—the climate is perfection, neither hot nor cold, nor disagreeable in any way throughout the year, except from rain and damp for a short period. If climate were everything, I should prefer living on this spot to any other that I know in the world. And although I shall be heartily glad when, after accomplishing the purposes for which I came, I can return home, I nevertheless feel that during my absence it is a great consolation to have the enjoyment of a climate far superior to that of England, as well as to that of any part of India in which it was my lot to have a permanent residence. The Higginsons' children remain here always, and for them the advantage is inestimable. Mrs. Higginson is here chiefly, and only occasionally in Spanish Town. Higginson and myself are forced to be there whenever business requires us, but it will seldom happen that we may not be here some days in the week, and when the Parliament or the Court of Chancery is not sitting, we may be here for some whole weeks at a time. The Higginsons are quite well, and a great comfort to me in this land of strangers. He is at present the whole of my suite. He very kindly manages all my domestic concerns for me, which leaves me at liberty to devote all my attention to public affairs when in Spanish Town. I give dinners and balls, and endeavour to perform the duties of Governor towards the society; but here in the mountains we are quite retired, and there being no carriage road, are inaccessible to visitors. I have been obliged to resume riding in order to scramble up and down the mountains. I have got some steady horses and ponies which suit me pretty well. Any but steady ones would soon tumble me over a precipice."—[*Highgate, Jamaica, Dec. 2*, 1839.]

"I have not been able to write for some months, owing to continual occupation in public business. I commenced a tour of the island in February, which ended in the middle of March; and as I was moving all the while, that threw business into arrears. I had then a session of my Parliament, which ended in April. Then during the greater part of May I had a sitting of the Court of Chancery, in which, being Chancellor and sole Judge, I have to decide in the absence of all legal knowledge according to common sense and equity. This, while it lasts, is perhaps the most laborious part of my duties, as I do not discontinue as long as there is business to be done; and I may say that my Court is

without arrears, as I have got through every cause, motion, or petition that was ready for hearing.

"I hope to hear that Fern Hill is let on a long lease, for although I should probably be tempted to occupy it again, if I found it vacant on my return, I am sure, from past experience, that it would not be very desirable to do so. You see that I think of return. When it is to happen, God willing, I cannot foresee, but I sometimes think that it may be very soon, and as far as I alone am concerned the sooner the better. I did not come here, nor do I stay, for any object of my own. If I can render service to my country, well; as soon as I find that I cannot, I shall resign my charge. There is one evil here, the want of a sufficient labouring population, which it will be difficult for man to remedy—it may be done in time, but not, I fear, soon enough. There is another evil, caused by the wickedness of a few men—Baptist missionaries—pretended ministers of religion, but really wolves in sheep's clothing, who foment discontent and disaffection among the negro population. Whatever their motives may be, their conduct is most pernicious. This evil also seems to be without remedy. These things darken the prospect of doing good, and a short time will, I think, disclose whether I shall soon return or remain to surmount these difficulties. As far as I am to determine, this question will be decided by the degree of usefulness to the mother country and this island that may be likely to attend my stay."—[*June* 10, 1840.]

"I am quite well. . . . . I am going on quietly in my Government, with much to gratify me. I do not despair of entirely reconciling this Government to the mother country, and placing our mutual good-will on a footing not to be easily shaken. I shall then retire contented with what I have done. Other circumstances may compel me to resign sooner; but the time of my departure, as far as it depends on me, is fixed for one of two periods—either when I can do no good by staying, or when I can do no harm by going."—[*October* 7, 1840.]

"I do not despair of seeing you again. I cannot fix any time, but as I have no desire whatever to remain here longer than duty may require, the days will, I trust, come when I may feel myself at liberty to consult my own inclinations. I look not either to the East or any other direction that does not point straight to home. Your affectionate desire to have a likeness of me shall be immediately attended to. I have a portrait just sent to me taken by a

Danish artist, to whom, as a stranger in a foreign land, I thought it right to give a little employment. . . . I will send it to you, and if you do not like it, I will change it when I have a better. It is full size, half length, but not in costume. A full length has been taken by another artist, with all my trappings on, but this is not mine. It has been done by public subscription, and is intended for the Town Hall of our principal city, Kingston."—[*February* 22, 184-.]

"I rejoice to think that you are thinking of the scheme that has occurred to me, and that it seems to present more and more the prospect of reality.* I have no fancy for any particular county; and should prefer of all things an exchange to a living in the country where your husband could perform his duties to his satisfaction, and where I could, in some degree, perform mine by assisting his poor parishioners. The most essential points in addition to these are, that it should be healthy and retired, and if pretty and romantic so much the better. . . . . Neither are you suited to the turmoil of society, nor have I any inclination for it; I do not mean that we should cease to hold intercourse with friends. We could go forth to have meetings with them either together or separately; and without keeping a *Red Lion*, we might have a spare room or two for such as might occasionally come to see us. My mind is continually dwelling on this subject, and forming arrangements of detail subservient to the general plan. We might sometimes go to the sea-side for Emy's benefit—sometimes take a little tour, and so forth; but my own inclination would generally be for a stationary, retired, and almost secluded life. Nothing is so intolerable to me as general society; and it has been a great comfort in my Government of Jamaica, that although I am frequently obliged to perform those duties towards society which are proper in my station, I can nevertheless, from the difficulty of access to my mountain residence, enjoy a considerable portion of retirement."—[*August* 27, 1841.]

"My thoughts dwell unceasingly on a quiet retreat with you in some sequestered nook, secluded from the world, its heartlessness and vanity. If you see such a place, recollect that it cannot be too retired, too small, or too humble and modest for me. . . . .

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* The letter from which this passage is taken, and the following, are addressed to his sister—Mrs. Smythe; the preceding ones to Mrs. Monson.

My only views of future happiness and comfort in this world consist in this vision of retirement with you, variegated by occasional visits, either jointly or separately, or rather trips, for the purpose of meeting with other friends. Such is the plan my heart is bent on, unless it be ordained for me that I must undertake public duties, and even in that case I shall hope that the vision may be realized during the greater part of the year."—[*Sept.* 17, 1841.]

"I have given notice to the new Ministers that I may soon send in my resignation, in order that they may be prepared for it, and look about for my successor. I have done this in a manner which will preclude the idea that the change of Ministry is the cause of my retirement, there being no reason for putting it on any ground but the true one, which is, that having done what I came to do, by which I mean the reconciliation of the colony with the mother-country, I see no necessity for staying any longer.* With respect to the locality for our retirement, it will be as well, I think, to select it without any reference to the possibility of my going into Parliament, regarding the latter as an uncertain chance for which I must provide distinctly if it should occur. A Parliamentary position would, during the sittings, lead to a mode of life inconsistent with the retirement that I desire, and troublesome and fatiguing to you, if we were at these times together. It will, therefore, perhaps be best to fix on a locality where we could enjoy perfect retirement together, either the whole year round, or when I might not be absent on Parliamentary duty. . . . . I hope to be in England in May or June. I must present myself in London at first, and be presented at Court; but a few days will, I conclude, suffice for all that may be necessary in the metropolis, including the seeing of my friends, and I shall then be ready to go to you wherever you may be,

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* In a letter written to his cousin, Lord Monson, about this time, Metcalfe repeated that his resignation had nothing to do with the change of Ministers. "Whatever effect," he wrote, "that might have produced, it so happens that I should equally have resigned at this period if the late Ministers had remained in power. I consider my work here as accomplished, and myself consequently at liberty to return to the privacy better suited to my natural inclination than the restraints of a Government, except when a public duty of adequate importance is to be performed."

and to arrange our future plans for that retirement which is requisite for the perfect quiet which suits us both."—[*Nov.* 1, 1841.]

"North Devon has, I think, always been a favourite part of the country with you, and if there be anything like a retreat there, it would suit me as well as any other. Retirement in a healthy spot, with as much of the beauties of nature as can be procured, is a description which embraces all my wants: as you would add affectionate society, and I can produce the *sine quâ non* of a library.

"'La que faut-il pour le bonheur?
La Paix, la douce Paix du cœur,
Le desir vrai qu'on nous oublie
Le travail, qui sait eloigner,
Tous les pleaux de notre vie,
Assez de bien pour en donner,
Et pas assez pour faire envie.'

"I have not seen these lines since I read them in the works of Florian, some thirty-two years ago, when I was at Madras; but they made such an impression on me, for my taste was always the same, that I have never forgotten them. . . . . I do not, however, assent to the sentiment in the last line. One cannot have too much, provided that it be well spent and not wasted on the frivolous luxuries which are almost a disgrace to our country; and I should care little for the envy that the means of doing good to others might create. If all one's income were to be spent in housekeeping and establishment, which would have been my lot at Fern Hill, it would have been of no consequence whether it were great or small (for one would be equally poor, having nothing to give away in either case), except that there would be more happiness in a small establishment than a large one, and therefore the smaller income would be the better."—[*Nov.* 29, 1841.]

"I question whether the neighbourhood of friends is desirable for the purpose of retirement, unless they be friends of equally retired habits with ourselves. . . . . If placed within reach of society, although I shall be disinclined for it, to what degree I may be driven into it will depend more on others than myself, and I shall probably, as has been the case with me all my life, sacrifice my own taste to some sense of social duty according to which, although from my infancy inclined to be a recluse, I

have been society, wherever I have been stationed in the East or the West, more universally than most people similarly situated. If, therefore, I were selecting a residence for myself, it would be where I could enjoy the most absolute solitude."—[*December* 19, 1841.]

At this time Sir Charles Metcalfe had too much public business always pressing upon him to indulge in general private correspondence; but he thought much of his old Indian friends, and with characteristic liberality sent many of them what he called "West-Indian Nuzzurs"—presents of the preserved produce of the island, always so welcome at home. A large number of letters received by him at this time commenced with an expression of thanks for some such luxurious gift.

His hospitality during his residence in Jamaica was profuse; but he had become more than ever disposed to prefer the society of the few to the society of the many. He gave without stint the dinner-parties and balls which he always believed that it was the duty of men in high station to give; but it was in his own private circle that he really enjoyed happiness. The constant presence of his friend Higginson and his family, to every member of which he was warmly attached, was a perennial consolation to him. He had the happy faculty of shaking off business entirely when once he had completed the work of the day; and in the domestic circle was only the pleasant companion and the affectionate friend. He had little time for reading, but his love of literature never deserted him. He had always been a reader of the periodical literature of the day, and now from the *Quarterly* and *Edinburgh Reviews*, and two or three of the London papers, of which the *Examiner* was his chief favourite, he derived much of the information which it was not permitted to him to acquire from books. With the progress of legislation in the mother country he had always conceived

it a duty to be acquainted. In India he had been a steady reader of "Hansard's Debates;" but this knowledge of the proceedings of Parliament he now derived from the reports in the daily papers.

As a Governor, he was peculiarly accessible. Even when time was of the greatest importance to him, he never denied an interview to one who sought it, unless the petitioner were a woman. Applicants of the gentler sex he always referred to his Staff; or he desired them to state their wishes in writing. He was wont to say, that if he could not accede to the requests that were made to him, he could at least grant a poor man another interview if he were eager for it. To all charitable applications he attended with the same kindly generosity which had distinguished his givings in the East. He gave, too, in the most catholic spirit, to all classes and all denominations. He freely subscribed to every island institution which was calculated directly or indirectly to benefit any description of his fellow men. And the money which he spent in Jamaica considerably exceeded the emoluments of his office.

The great success of his administration contributed largely to his happiness; but he often indulged pleasing anticipations of a return to England, and an unbroken residence there. In answer to a reference made to him by a distinguished member of the Court of Directors, as to whether he would undertake the Governorship of Bombay, he wrote, that he could accept no minor Government, and that he had no desire to return to India. His thoughts still turned towards a seat in Parliament. "I had no personal object in coming here," he wrote to an old friend, then a member of the House, "and have none for remaining; and shall be glad to find myself at liberty to end my days in England, either in the comfort of retirement, or in the faithful discharge of public duty in an independent seat in

Parliament, where the only drawback would be that I should find myself opposed to several of my best friends, who, yourself for instance, and C—— and B——, are arrant Tories. God bless you all nevertheless!"

His general health was very good at this time; but he suffered much from a painful local disease, which subsequently ate into his life. This was an ulcerous affection of the face, the first slight symptoms of which had made their appearance some years before in India, but had excited no kind of apprehension. . . . . I feel great difficulty in dealing with this part of my subject. It is not the duty of a biographer to treat of physical infirmity with the minuteness of professional science; it is not his duty to gratify any morbid craving after the revelations of the sick-room. But as from this point of the narrative it is only by carrying with him an abiding sense of the corporal sufferings which Charles Metcalfe endured that the reader can rightly appreciate the greatness of his character and the heroism of his conduct, I am compelled either to speak more plainly of certain things than some may consider consistent with delicacy or good taste, or to do but imperfect justice to the brave-hearted man whose life I am permitted to illustrate. If, therefore, I say too much or too little on this painful subject, I claim the indulgence of the public for an error, at least not lightly committed.

A red spot upon the cheek—a drop of blood, to which a friend called his attention one day in Calcutta, was the first visible sign of the slowly-developed mischief. From that time there were morbid appearances of the skin; but their "growth was so gradual and imperceptible, and so devoid of any uneasiness, that the progress went on for years without his thinking it worthy of notice to any medical gentleman, and without the ailment attracting the notice of the medical adviser whom during that interval

he frequently saw."* Towards the end of 1837, however, when Sir Charles Metcalfe was Governor of the North-Western Provinces of India, the affection had so far increased that he thought it necessary to consult the medical officer attached to his personal staff. The treatment to which he was subjected did not remove the disorder; and indeed there was little time for its development; for before the year had expired Metcalfe was on his way to Calcutta, and in February he embarked for England. At the Presidency he appeared in excellent health; he said nothing about his ailment: and an experienced medical officer and valued friend who saw him every day observed no peculiar appearances of the cheek, and had no suspicion of any disease.

On the voyage to England no treatment was attempted; but soon after his arrival, the symptoms were sufficiently troublesome to induce Metcalfe to seek the advice of Sir Benjamin Brodie, who prescribed for him without effect. When he took up his residence at Fern Hill, he placed himself under the charge of a country practitioner, who also prescribed some local applications, but with no better result. At this time the malady had become a decided ulcerous affection of the cheek; but it was then a painless disorder, and excited so little apprehension in Metcalfe's mind, that after his appointment to the Government of Jamaica, though he spent some time in London, he did not think of again presenting himself to Sir Benjamin Brodie—an omission very much to be deplored.†

* In 1843, Sir Charles Metcalfe drew up a minute statement of his case, from which these words are taken, and from which, together with the report of the principal medical gentlemen who attended him, whatever information on the subject of his malady may appear in these pages is derived.

† "I have always regarded this circumstance as a great misfortune; for had he again, after thirteen months, presented him-

On the voyage to Jamaica, the application of a zinc ointment, recommended by a young medical man on board, produced decided local benefit; but the irritation which it occasioned was great, and the treatment was discontinued. And now, under the influence of the tropical climate, aggravated by the numberless flies which are among the chief pests of the island, the malignancy of the disorder was continually increasing. No kind of treatment seemed in the least to arrest it. It went on from bad to worse; but still Metcalfe never complained. He never in any of his letters, even to the nearest and dearest of his friends, spoke of this distressing affection. His general account of his health was, that it was very good. Whatever he may have suffered at this time, his sufferings did not in any way interfere with the discharge of his public duties. The medical practitioners under whom he placed himself saturated his whole system with internal doses of arsenic until his fingers swelled, and he began to think that the remedy was worse than the disease. Then they applied the same strong poison externally; and with all the beautiful patience and heroic firmness which at a later stage were still more signally developed, he bore the acute pain which this remedy inflicted. But the malady did not yield to the application. At this and at subsequent periods every conceivable remedy that quackery could suggest was urged upon him from one quarter or another. To a Jamaica practitioner, who declared that he had effected some wonderful cures of cancers of long standing, he directed a courteous reply to be sent, saying that he

self to Sir Benjamin Brodie, trifling as the appearance then was, it might have had in it something to arouse suspicion on the part of so acute and experienced an observer—something to suggest caution under the influence of a tropical climate."—[*MS. Memorandum by Mr. J. R. Martin.*]

was already under treatment, and that although his disease was obstinate, it was not supposed to be cancer.

Whether this distressing malady had any influence in inducing Sir Charles Metcalfe to resign the Government of Jamaica, I do not know. But it is certain that it caused him to look forward with pleasurable expectancy to the ease and retirement of private life; and, perhaps, with hopeful assurance to the means of obtaining in the mother country all the best professional aid that surgery and medicine could afford to arrest the progress of his disease and to assuage his anguish.

As the time for his departure drew near, it became manifest how much he was beloved and respected by all classes of Jamaica society. He had asked to be relieved from his Government in the spring, in order that he might arrive in England at a season of the year favourable to the constitution of one who had spent all his life in a tropical climate; and now that the period had arrived which was to witness his embarkation for his native country, there were few who did not grieve for the loss which they were about to sustain as for the loss of a beloved friend. Addresses, expressive of regret, gratitude, and attachment, signed by people of all classes and all denominations, came in from every part of the island. The universal voice of the colony seemed to be lifted up in a chorus of benediction. I need not treat in detail of all these several addresses. The language of all was substantially the same, varied only by local and accidental circumstances:

"We cannot review your Excellency's brief administration of the affairs of this important colony,"—such was the language of these addresses,—"or contrast its present with its late condition, without being impressed with the advantages which have resulted from your Excellency's exertions, and convinced of our inability

to make any adequate expression of them. Our thanks are all we have to offer. If, however, gratitude can stamp these with value in your Excellency's estimation—and that value is to be estimated by the strength of our gratitude, then are they the richest and most costly gifts which we can make to your Excellency in return for the benefits conferred upon them in common with the inhabitants of the island at large. Nor will this feeling be abated by distance either of time or of space, and whether in the privacy of domestic life, or amid the tumult of business, your Excellency will have our continued prayers for your renovated and continued health, and the enjoyment of every blessing which can render your Excellency happy in time, and secure for you a glorious eternity."*

To this Sir Charles Metcalfe replied, after a warm expression of his thanks:

"If I had supposed that your position or prospects would in any respect have been improved by my continued residence among you, I should have regarded it as a positive duty to remain as long as it might have been in my power, and should have cheerfully devoted myself to so delightful a task. But it is my belief that your prosperity mainly depends upon circumstances which, I hope, may be favourable, and which can hardly be influenced by the executive head of the Government. As far as they may be under the influence of that authority, I see every reason to congratulate you on the selection that has been made for your future Governor. A nobleman has been appointed of high rank, acknowledged talents, and excellent reputation both in public and private life,† who will be a suitable representative of her gracious Majesty in the colony, and will doubtless apply his abilities, judgment, and public spirit to the welfare and happiness of every class of the community over whom it is his honourable and happy destiny to preside; and from whom he will, I am sure, receive, as I have, general support and co-operation. A short period, gentlemen, will separate me from you, and place a wide space between us. Some of you I hope to meet again in England—where I must ever feel as a brother towards every inhabitant of Jamaica, and where, among recollections of this land which will

* Address of the parish of St. Andrew's. † Lord Elgin.

cheer the remainder of my days, I shall never forget the kindness of its warm-hearted inhabitants."

Nor was the interchange of courtesies at this time confined to the presentation and the reception of public addresses. He desired to mark his sense of the good feeling with which the principal functionaries of the island had transacted office business with him, by presenting them each with some token of his esteem. The newspapers of Jamaica recorded that he had given "his Excellency's splendid carriage" to the President of the Council; "a pair of beautiful carriage-horses" to the Speaker of the House of Assembly; "a favourite black saddle-horse" to the Island Secretary; with "liberal donations of money" to the clerks in the Government and Private Secretary's Office, to his household servants, and others. It was recorded, too, that he had made a large contribution of his "personal effects to the public, to form part of the establishment at the King's House;" and the narrative of his generosity seemed to reach its climax when the contemporary annalist added to the list of these benefices, that Sir Charles Metcalfe had "directed 8,000*l.* to be placed to the credit of the island, this being the amount of the third part of the escheated property due to him."*

On the 21st of May, 1842, Sir Charles Metcalfe once again embarked for England. The scene will never be forgotten by those who witnessed it. From even the most distant places crowds of people of all classes had come to see for the last time, and to say God-speed to, the Governor whose public and private virtues they so loved and revered. The old island militia-men, who had not been called out for years, volunteered to form his escort. The "coloured

* *Jamaica Despatch, 24th of May*, 1842. I have adopted the words of the island journalist—but would not the sense be better conveyed by a little transposition? Were not the 8,000*l.* "the amount due to him of the third part of the escheated property?"

population knelt to bless him."* Many present on that occasion, at once so gratifying and so painful to the departing statesman, felt that they had lost a friend who could never be replaced. All classes of society and all sects of Christians sorrowed for his departure; and the Jews set an example of Christian love by praying for him in their synagogues.

He went—but the statue voted by the island, and erected in the public square of Spanish Town, is not a more enduring record of his residence in Jamaica than the monument which he has made for himself in the hearts of a grateful people.†

* *Colonial Gazette.*

†I have said in this chapter and elsewhere, that it would require a separate volume to enable me to give all the addresses presented to Sir Charles Metcalfe. The Jamaica Farewell Addresses, and the address presented in Canada on the resignation of the Executive Council have been published, each in a volume—the one at Kingston, the other at Toronto. These collections, though only a portion of the entire body of addresses now before me, would occupy more than 400 of these pages. From one address, presented to him on his return from Jamaica by the Colonial Society, I am tempted to insert an extract at the close of this chapter, for it contains a summary of the good results of his government of the island:—

"Your administration exhibited an undeviating adherence to those just and liberal principles by which alone the relations between the parent State and her colonies can be maintained with the feelings essential to their mutual honour and welfare. . . . .

"The beneficial effects of an administration conducted on these principles were experienced in the confidence, the harmony, the kind feeling, and the good order which again pervaded all the relations of society—in the reconciliation of the colony with the mother country—in the active and cordial co-operation of the whole community—in the increased means of religious and moral instruction—in the extensive improvement of the judicial system—in the tone and character of the legislation—in the grateful affection with which you were beloved by all classes of the people

whom you governed—in the high approbation which you received from your Sovereign.

"Your administration has a claim on our warmest gratitude, not only for the service it has rendered Jamaica, but for the beneficial influence it will exercise in promoting the welfare, by securing the good government, of every other possession of the British Empire. Colonial Governments can never hereafter be conducted on any other principles than those of your administration. The success of that administration would command, even if the truth and justice of those principles should fail to recommend, their adoption."

CHAPTER XIII.

[1842—1843.]

DEER PARK TO KINGSTON.

Metcalfe's Arrival in England—Progress of his Disorder—Painful Remedies—His Endurance—Residence at Norwood—Removal to Deer Park—Offer of the Government of Canada—Farewell Honours—The Voyage to Boston—Journey to Kingston.

If the prayers of the people which followed Charles Metcalfe to England could have availed to protect him against sickness and sorrow, he would have arrived there in the enjoyment of all that man can desire. But it pleased God to visit him severely. He arrived in great bodily anguish. His malady had increased during the voyage.

He reached England on the 2nd of July, 1842, and proceeded to Mivart's Hotel. Almost immediately after his arrival there, he despatched to his old Indian medical attendant, Mr. J. R. Martin, who had established himself as a practitioner in London, a note saying, "Besides the desire to see you well, happy, and successful, as I trust you are, I am anxious to have your aid professionally, on account of an ulcer in my face, the character of which seems uncertain, and which does not yield to any treatment as yet bestowed upon it."

The result of this note was a consultation between Sir Benjamin Brodie and Mr. Martin. The advice of another eminent surgeon, Mr. Keate, was also sought; and Dr. Chambers, as a physician, was added to the council. The

question to be decided, in the first instance, was whether Sir Charles Metcalfe's malady was to be treated medically or surgically. The decision was in favour of the latter course, and the case was then left in the hands of Sir Benjamin Brodie and Mr. Martin.

Then another question, and a painful one, arose—whether the malignant disorder should be extirpated by the knife or burnt out by a strong caustic. The latter, by far the more painful operation of the two, was determined upon. The proposed mode of treatment was communicated to Sir Charles Metcalfe; and it was added, that the caustic might, perhaps, "destroy the cheek through and through." To all of this he only remarked, in reply, "Whatever you determine shall be done at once."

On the same afternoon the caustic was applied. During several hours the agony which the patient endured was intense; and for three days afterwards the pain continued, slight only in proportion to the tortures of the first application. But although there was such a disturbance of the system as to excite some apprehensions for his safety, not a word of complaint escaped from him. He betrayed, indeed, none of the ordinary indications of extreme suffering—unless unusual silence is to be regarded as one. Opiates had no effect upon him; they seemed only to increase his watchfulness. Nor did he seem to desire a resort to them. He looked his trial manfully in the face; and knew that he had strength to meet it.

The immediate success of the operation was greater even than the medical practitioners had ventured to hope. The restorative effects of quiet and country air were, however, deemed essential to his recovery; and yet it was not expedient to remove him beyond the reach of the experienced surgeons who were watching his case. So accommodation was secured for him in the Beulah-Spa Hotel, at Norwood; and there he remained for several weeks. "I

am not now in much pain," he wrote on the 24th of July, "but have some distressing effects from the applications; and may be an invalid for some time to come. Whether I shall be cured or not remains to be seen."

On the 5th of August he wrote to another correspondent, "I saw the doctors again yesterday. They consider my amendment as more than they expected. They are, however, evidently not certain of a final cure; and speak of the necessity of watching appearances. On the whole, the diseased part looks better than it has done for many years—but I must not holloa till I am out of the wood." On the 17th, writing again to the same beloved correspondent,* he said, "I hope in a few days that I shall be discharged from hospital; and able to do what I like with myself. I do not think that the malady is perfectly extracted, but if I once get out of the doctors' hands cured to their satisfaction, I shall not have much anxiety regarding the future."

When undisturbed by visitors at the Norwood hotel, Metcalfe thought much of the future, and was continually balancing the advantages of an active life in Parliament or one of absolute retirement. Sometimes, perhaps, a painful doubt would obtrude as to whether his malady might not incapacitate him for public business; but such misgivings as these were never of long continuance. To Mr. Tucker he wrote on the 24th of July:†

"I do not think of any public service for myself, excepting Parliament; and the prospect of that is extremely uncertain, for

* Captain J. M. Higginson.

† In other private letters he touches upon the same subject. To Captain Higginson he wrote in August: "You ask about Parliament. My desire for it is lessening. It is so manifest that I could not be of much, if of any, use there. I cannot, however, yet say that I should decline any favourable opportunity of entering it, though I see no reason to expect one. There is

there are obstacles, in the possibility of my being an invalid for life, either from an incurable complaint, or from the effects of surgical remedies; and if I recover, in the want of local influence and my own dislike to the usual means of obtaining a seat—such as bribery and corruption, canvassing, and so forth. I do not perceive why you should speak in disparagement of your own honourable and useful career, during which you have done much good, and must have prevented much evil. You were one of the few who condemned our mad policy in Afghanistan, when the world admired and applauded; and although you could not prevent it, your opposition to it will ever redound to your honour."

On the whole, he persuaded himself at this time that what he most required was a life of retirement and leisure. A country-house had been taken for him in the neighbourhood of Honiton, in Devenshire, and he was eager to escape to it.* He left Norwood in the course of September; and after paying a few visits, joined his sister, Mrs. Smythe, at Clifton. In the beginning of October they went together to Deer Park, which was the name of the residence at Honiton; and thence Metcalfe wrote, in the following month, that he was "very happy in the affectionate society of his sister." But he added, that he was going to town for a few days—"partly to meet my friend Arthur Cole before he quits England for the Mediterranean; partly to visit the Brownriggs at Fern Hill, which they have taken from my tenant Sir Felix Booth; and partly to consult the doctors regarding my face, which has never been quite well, and latterly has been getting worse."

The intentions here expressed were carried out. At the

nothing, therefore, in the prospect that will interfere with the perfect enjoyment of retirement." In another letter he writes with still less eagerness, saying, "I almost dread rather than desire an opportunity of coming into Parliament."

* This residence had been hired for a year during the absence of the proprietor on the Continent; and Metcalfe engaged to keep up the establishment, &c.

end of November he went to London; saw his friends; and consulted his medical advisers. "They applied a caustic," he wrote to his cousin, Lord Monson, "composed of nitric acid and arsenic, the effect of which, after a fortnight's trial of the result, they pronounced to be sufficient and satisfactory, and gave me my congee to return. So I returned; but there the malady is. They, however, triumph in a supposed cure; and I ought to have more faith in their decisions."

Whilst paying the promised visit to Fern Hill, he received a royal command to dine at Windsor Castle. He had been speculating some time before on the probable cause of the apparent want of cordiality shown to him by her Majesty's Ministers. That, in Jamaica, he had rendered great services to the Crown all men were eager to declare. But he had returned to England, and the responsible advisers of the Crown had taken no sort of notice of him. He was inclined to attribute this to the circumstance of a common impression among the Tories, that the change of Ministry had induced him to retire from his Government. But it is probable that the knowledge of the painful disorder which was afflicting him, and the necessity of temporary retirement, suggested the expediency of withholding for a time the demonstrations for which he was entitled to look. Whatever may have been the cause, Metcalfe felt at this time that he had been neglected; and, therefore, the royal command was all the more welcome to him.

On this occasion he met, for the first time, Sir Robert Peel, who was then at the head of the Government. He

* The circumstances of their meeting were not very propitious. Having gone early, Metcalfe was left for some time in the drawing-room alone. After waiting for about half an hour, a gentleman entered the room—but as several dignified-looking personages, who were in reality servants out of livery, had passed in and out

had little sympathy at this time with the great Conservative statesman, and could not bring himself to believe that any liberal measures were to be expected from him. "The abominable Corn-laws," he wrote to Lord Monson, "are, I hope, doomed; but I shall be agreeably surprised if they receive their death-blow from Sir Robert Peel."*

of the saloon whilst he had been sitting there, he did not know whether the new comer was one of these or a guest. In his uncertainty he rose to meet him. "The stranger advanced," said Metcalfe, who soon afterwards told the story in a family letter, "in rather an awkward, or, perhaps, I ought to say, in a shy and unassuming manner, and I also advanced, equally awkward I have no doubt. I had never seen the gentleman before. He said, 'Sir Charles Metcalfe, I presume?'—to which I bowed, and intimated assent. He added, with a little hesitation, seeing that I did not know him, 'Sir Robert Peel.' I made another bow. We talked together for a few minutes, when the Queen and Prince Albert entered, and Sir Robert Peel and I did not find ourselves together again for the rest of the evening. . . . . Although he said something complimentary to me or my government of Jamaica, there was much reserve and want of freedom in his conversation" —an observation which it is not improbable Peel would have reciprocated, for Metcalfe himself was shy and reserved in the presence of strangers. "It was odd," wrote Metcalfe, "that I had not seen him before."—A few years afterwards it would have been hardly possible for a man, though he had spent all his days in India, to meet Sir Robert Peel for the first time without knowing him, even in the streets. But, in 1842, the picture-papers, which have since made the externals of every public man in the country as familiar to the Indian exile as to his brethren at home, were then only in their infancy.

* In another letter written soon afterwards to the same correspondent, he thus expressed, with much sagacity, his anticipations of the probable effects of the repeal of the Corn-laws:—"When I spoke of the abominable Corn-laws, I must have forgotten that I was addressing myself to a landholder, whose income is derived from rent. You bear the expectation of loss most nobly, and I trust that you will be rewarded by no loss. I do not think that the landlords will be eventually sufferers, whatever alarm may at first prevail. The probable effect of the abolition of the Corn-

Neither could he bring himself to believe, at this time, that there was any prospect of a Conservative Government delighting to honour, either by the offer of public employments or recommendation to the Crown for honorary distinction, a statesman known to be saturated through and through with Liberal opinions. But he was greatly in error. He had scarcely reconciled himself to the apparent neglect—scarcely made up his mind to enjoy, as he knew he should enjoy, the quiet of the country and the companionship of beloved friends, when he discovered that the Tory Ministers had not overlooked his services—had not forgotten the man who had saved Jamaica, and might yet rescue another colony from impending destruction.

He was very happy at Deer Park. He often said, indeed, that the days which he spent there with his sister were the happiest of his life. He was full of plans for the future. At one time he had determined on taking a lease of a country-seat in Devonshire; but it was found that the climate of that county was prejudicial to his companion's health; and then his thoughts turned towards the neighbourhood of Clifton. His old dreams of ambition he had well-nigh dreamt out; he had found peace and happiness in retirement.

But the new year, 1843, had hardly dawned, before rumours began to float about the metropolis to the effect that Sir Charles Metcalfe was to be appointed Governor-General of Canada. These reports were speedily communicated to him in different ways. It often happens that in these cases the first informants are hungry candidates for place and patronage, whose wants are communicated with the speed of an electric telegraph, before the statesman

laws is, I believe, exaggerated on both sides of the question. I do not expect that it will either ruin the landlords or prevent destitution in an overpeopled country. But it is a righteous measure, and ought to be adopted."

himself has any knowledge of the honours that are in store for him. Applications for some little place under your Excellency's Government are commonly, indeed, the shadows cast before the coming event; and so it was in this month of January, when reports were rife in London that Sir Charles Metcalfe was going out to Canada.* But there were other letters than these—letters of affectionate solicitude or friendly warning. Among the latter was one from Mr. R. D. Mangles,† who, as an officer of the secretariat, had served under Metcalfe in India, and who, in common with all his brethren of the Indian civil service, was deeply interested in his success. The report had been mentioned at a dinner party, at which Mr. Gibbon Wakefield was present, and that gentleman, who was as well versed in colonial politics as any man in the country, had asked Mr. Mangles, who was another of the party, if he were a friend of Sir Charles Metcalfe, to inform him "that neither he nor any other statesman would act wisely in accepting the Governor Generalship of Canada without making certain stipulations with, and receiving certain powers to act from, the Home Ministry." And the purport of this communication Mr. Mangles wrote, on the 12th of January, to Deer Park. To this friendly note Sir Charles Metcalfe sent back, by return of post, the following reply:—

SIR CHARLES METCALFE TO MR. R. D. MANGLES.

"*Deer Park, Honiton, January* 13, 1843.

"MY DEAR MANGLES,—I thank you cordially for your friendly caution, and regard it as an act of the greatest kindness; but I have

* "This business," he wrote, "commenced in consequence of rumour, before I myself dreamed of going to Canada, and I was for several days employed in answering applications by contradicting the report and declaring it to be utterly unfounded."

† Member for Guildford, and Director of the East India Company.

no more idea of going to Canada than of flying in the air. Not a word has ever passed between her Majesty's Ministers and me indicative of any desire on their part to call for my services, or on mine for employment. I am enjoying the comforts of tranquillity and retirement in the affectionate society of my sister, Mrs. Smythe; and should be very sorry to be disturbed by any offer of office that a sense of public duty might induce me to accept. Fortunately, I have no reason to expect any. The only thing that I have the least inclination for is a seat in Parliament, of which, in the present predominance of Toryism among the constituencies, there is no chance for a man who is for the abolition of the Corn-laws, Vote by Ballot, Extension of the Suffrage, Amelioration of the Poor-laws for the benefit of the poor, equal rights to all sects of Christians in matters of religion, and equal rights to all men in civil matters, and everything else that to his understanding seems just and right; and, at the same time, is totally disqualified to be a demagogue—shrinks like a sensitive plant from public meetings; and cannot bear to be drawn from close retirement, except by what comes in the shape of real or fancied duty to his country.

Thus let me live unseen, unknown,
Thus unlamented let me die;
Steal from the world, and not a stone
Tell where I lie.

"I nevertheless take an interest in all public matters, and am looking eagerly to the opening of the Parliamentary campaign in the beginning of the next month; but not with much hope of any national good in its progress.

"I am, yours most sincerely,

"C. T. METCALFE."

Two days after this letter was written, Sir Charles Metcalfe had good reason to think that his London correspondents were not wholly misinformed. On the 15th of January, the Deer Park post-bag was found to contain the following important communication from Downing-street; or, as he playfully called it, "a fatal missive from Lord Stanley":—

LORD STANLEY TO SIR CHARLES METCALFE.

"*Downing-street, January* 14, 1843.

"My dear Sir,—I have learnt with very sincere pleasure that your health has been very considerably re-established since your return to this country. I know not, however, whether it is sufficiently so to enable you, or whether, if able, you would be disposed, again to take upon yourself most honourable, but, at the same time, very arduous duties in the public service. Should your answer to this preliminary inquiry be unfortunately in the negative, I need not, of course, trouble you further; but, in the event of your entertaining no insuperable objection to again giving this department the advantage of your valuable services, I would beg you to favour me by calling here any day next week which may be most convenient to yourself, when I should be happy to enter upon an unreserved communication with you upon the subject.

"I have the honour to be, my dear Sir,

"Yours faithfully,

"Stanley."

There could be no doubt about the answer that was now to be returned to the Colonial Secretary.* Sir Charles Metcalfe had but one standard of right whereby on all such occasions to regulate his personal conduct. The decision had nothing to do with self. The only question to be considered was, whether he could render service to the State. He did not hesitate for a moment to place himself at the disposal of the Crown; so he sent back the following answer:—

SIR CHARLES METCALFE TO LORD STANLEY.

"*Deer Park, Honiton, January* 15, 1843.

"My Lord,—I have this morning had the honour of receiving your lordship's most obliging letter; and as your time is precious,

* No reader of the present day need to be told that the Lord Stanley named in these volumes is the distinguished nobleman known, at the date of their publication, as the Earl of Derby. But the specification may not, on that account, be altogether useless.

I will only say, that I shall have no hesitation in placing myself at your disposal, provided that the duty to be undertaken be one in which I can see my way, and may hope to render useful service to the State. I will proceed towards town to-morrow, and, weather and railway permitting, may expect to arrive on the afternoon of Wednesday. Any intimation of your lordship's commands, as to when and where I shall wait on you, will find me if sent to No. 1, Hyde Park Gardens.*

"I remain, my Lord, &c. &c.,

"C. T. METCALFE."

There was no doubt in Sir Charles Metcalfe's mind, when on the following day he took his seat in the railway carriage, that the honourable employment offered to him was the Government of Canada. Perhaps it was the last office in the world which he would have chosen for himself. "I am not sure," he wrote to Captain Higginson, before his departure from Deer Park, "that the Government of Canada is a manageable affair; and unless I think I can go to a good purpose, I will not go at all." But he went to London, saw Lord Stanley, and the Canadian appointment was offered and accepted. That he doubted his wisdom, mistrusted his motives, but resolutely determined to do his best, the following passages from his private correspondence at this time sufficiently show:—

TO CAPTAIN HIGGINSON.

"I have accepted the Government of Canada without being sure that I have done right. For I do not see my way so clearly as I wish. Neither do I expect to do so before I reach my destination. But the offer having been made, and the matter talked over between Lord Stanley and me, I do not like to keep the Government waiting whilst I was shilly-shallying, and I allowed what I fancy to be public duty to prevail; and agreed to undertake the task proposed."—[*Mivart's Hotel, January* 19, 1843.]

TO MRS. SMYTHE.

"I have just returned from Lord Stanley, and have accepted the Government of Canada. And thus there is an end to the

* The residence of Metcalfe's old friend, Mr. J. S. Brownrigg.

happiness that I was enjoying with you, and that I hoped would last during my life. What is it that moves me to resign such a prospect for the cares and uncertainties of public life and distant service? Is it pure patriotism and a sense of duty, or is it foolishness and lurking ambition? It is a sad break-up of happiness, and I have so few years left to spare, and few to fall back upon, if I ever return. Still, that must be my hope. And God grant that what we have hitherto been contemplating is only postponed to be realised hereafter. The time for my departure is not fixed; and I trust that I shall have some weeks with you."—[*Mivart's, January* 19, 1843.]

TO THE SAME.

"When I wrote my first note of this morning I had a gleam of hope that I might have a justifiable ground for declining to go to Canada; but I have since been at the Colonial Office, and the obstacle, which was of a public nature, has been removed. So I must still go. I had a stronger hope of being able to return to you on Tuesday to remain awhile. But I am to see the Queen to take leave on Tuesday week. It will, therefore, probably be Thursday week, in the afternoon, before I see you. I shall then be able to enjoy about a fortnight with you; the last days, I was going to say, of happiness that I shall probably ever know. But even those will not be days of happiness, for they will be embittered by the approach of separation. Never was a man dragged into public employment more against his will. It is with difficulty that I can write even the little that I do. God protect you all. I am to embark by steam on the 4th March."—[*Mivart's, January* 21, 1843.]

TO MR. MANGLES.

". . . . A thousand thanks for your great kindness. I have received both your letters. You must be as much surprised as I am to find that I am going to Canada. I never undertook anything with so much reluctance, or so little hope of doing good; but I could not bring myself to say No, when the proposal was made. All my plans and expectations of happiness are knocked on the head; and I fear that the little reputation that I have acquired is more likely to be damaged than improved in the troubled waters of Canada. I know, from experience, that the chief embarrassment to a colonial Governor is the interference of the Home Government. At the same time, it is impossible to

stipulate that they shall not control the government of a colony. I must urge what is right and resist what is wrong, and come away as soon as I see that I can do no good. If I do any, I shall be agreeably surprised. I should be further obliged to you—I am exceedingly so already—if you could put me in the way of ascertaining, without giving Mr. Buller or yourself too much trouble, what 'the essential steps' are which he thinks a Governor of Canada ought to have power to take; for his opinion must be entitled to great weight."—[*Mivart's, January* 22, 1843.]

TO LORD MONSON.

". . . . I accepted without hesitation, because I had no sufficient reason for declining an honourable public duty of importance and difficulty—but I was, in truth, much happier when I was contradicting the report than I have been since it became verified. I was living with my sister in the enjoyment of freedom from care, as much retirement as is obtainable in this country, and great happiness in her affectionate society. I wanted nothing. I was not anxious for anything. I could truly say in the language of my motto, 'Conquiesco.' I had a lurking fancy for a seat in Parliament; but I was so comfortable without it, that I doubted the good sense of wishing for it, and did not dislike the manifest improbability of its presenting itself. This state of real enjoyment I quit to return to cares which are inconsistent with perfect happiness, and to a mode of life which I thoroughly dislike, merely because I cannot find a sufficient excuse for declining. Never did a man go so unwilling to anything by his own consent. Going, however, I am; and grumbling is useless. If I succeed in reconciling local dissensions, and promoting attachment between the colony and the mother country, I shall rejoice in having undertaken the charge. If I fail, which from the state of things is more probable, I must console myself with the assurance, that for the rest of my days I shall be left undisturbed in the retirement that I love."—[*Deer Park, Feb.* 10, 1843.]

It was a matter of no small importance in the existing state of the Canadian Government, or no-Government, that Sir Charles Metcalfe should proceed to North America with the utmost possible despatch. To Captain Higginson,*

* It was a characteristic trait of Metcalfe's generosity, that finding the salary of the Private Secretary was only 300*l.* per annum, he should have immediately offered to add 1,000*l.* to the

who was to accompany him in the capacity of Private Secretary, he wrote from Mivart's the following sketch of his plans:

"I am pressed to embark as soon as possible, in order that I may relieve Sir Charles Bagot, who is too ill either to govern or to move, and, because he cannot come away, cannot make over charge to any one but his successor. The earliest period at which the passage to Kingston, on Lake Ontario, which is the capital, and my point of arrival, can be made, and that only from Boston, in the United States, is the latter half of March. So I am to start on one of Cunard's steamers from Liverpool on the 4th of March—land at Boston on the 17th of March—go by railway to Utica, thence by road or canal to Oswego, on Lake Ontario—and across the Lake to Kingston. . . . . My own immediate plans are to remain in town until the 1st of February, when the Queen is to receive me, and then to proceed to Devonshire, to be with my poor sister for a fortnight, and then to return to town for a week or ten days before my departure."

A few weeks of chequered happiness at Deer Park brought him close upon the dreaded period of his departure. He seems to have had no great uneasiness about his health. "I am as well as ever," he wrote from Devonshire, "excepting the cheek, which is neither better nor worse than it has been for some time, but seems determined not to be quite well." Some days afterwards, however, he wrote to Mr. Martin, "The face has improved within the last week, and is now better, I think, than it ever has been since it was first ill." On the 21st of February he quitted Deer Park to spend, as he said, a week or ten days in London before his embarkation for the West. It was a brief, hurried interval of not very pleasurable excitement. Yet nothing could have more clearly demonstrated the estima-

yearly income from the salary of the Governor-General. A short time before, having learnt that Captain Higginson had suffered pecuniary loss by the failure of a Calcutta house of agency, he entreated to be permitted to make good the amount from his own private fortune.

tion in which he was held than the eagerness with which his society was sought. He was always a popular man, and just then he was in the meridian of his success. Some, doubtless, were anxious to entertain the Governor; but there were others who cared only to embrace the man.

Among the former were the members of the Colonial Society. This important and respectable body had presented a congratulatory address to Sir Charles Metcalfe on his return from Jamaica, and were now eager to invite him to a valedictory banquet. There were reasons, both of a public and private character, which would have induced him to decline the invitation. Some of his friends wrote to caution him against an attempt that would probably be made to extract from him some statement of his opinions, perhaps some inconsiderate promises and pledges, with regard his future government; and it was hinted at the same time that the entertainment was got up by a party—the "family compact men," with a specific object. But Metcalfe was the last man in the world to be led into any such indiscretion. He accepted the invitation because he was unwilling to cause disappointment, and he was assured that the entertainment was promoted in a catholic spirit by men representing all colonial interests. The dinner was given on the 27th of September at the Colonial Club, in St. James's-square. If any one then present expected to gather from Sir Charles Metcalfe's after-dinner speeches any revelations of his intended policy, they must have been grievously disappointed. He received all the compliments which were paid him in a grateful spirit, and he reciprocated with interest every expression of good-will. His speeches were lively, good-humoured, after-dinner speeches; but not a word was uttered, under the influence of his feelings, which he could have any cause to regret.

About the same time, Metcalfe's old India friends,

glorying as they did in his continued success, but thinking more of him as Charles Metcalfe than as Governor-General of the Canadas, were eager to give him another farewell entertainment. But when a preliminary meeting was held at the Oriental Club, it was suggested by the chairman,* that if Sir Charles Metcalfe were invited to sit for his picture instead of meeting his friends at dinner, the former compliment would be the more acceptable of the two. The suggestion was well received by the meeting; and it was unanimously resolved "That the Right Honourourable Sir C. T. Metcalfe, Bart., G.C.B., be requested to sit for his portrait for the Club, as an enduring memorial of the high respect, regard, and esteem in which his many public and private virtues are held." There were some members present who would have had the picture and the dinner too—but the admirable portrait by Mr. Say, in the library of the Oriental Club, would sufficiently declare the wisdom of the choice, even if the engraving which has been made from it had not enabled hundreds to have constantly before them the image of their benefactor and friend.

During Metcalfe's brief visit to the metropolis he was compelled, in accordance with the request thus intimated to him, to spend some time in "sitting for his picture." He had also to sit for his bust, which was executed by Mr. Bailey, to be placed in the Metcalfe Hall, in Calcutta. With all these calls upon his time, he might well report that he was "sadly hurried and worried." By the end of February, however, everything was accomplished except the dining with the Queen. On the 1st of March he wrote to his sister:

"One line, my dearest Georgiana, to say that I am alive and well, but sadly hurried and worried. Two nights I have been

* Sir J. L. Lushington. The suggestion came originally from Mr. Tucker.

entirely deprived of my writing hours, by being detained at parties until one or two o'clock. To-morrow, the last day of my being in town, I have the honour of dining with her Majesty. The compliments that I receive from all quarters are unbounded. Every one seems to give me credit for sacrificing personal comfort and happiness to public duty. . . . . The portrait and bust are both finished, and both excellent. You shall have a cast of the one and a copy or engraving of the other. Finished, I mean only as far as my sitting goes. The portrait will not be finished much before the Exhibition of 1844; and the bust at present is only in clay.* . . . .

"On the 3rd of March Sir Charles Metcalfe left London for Liverpool; and on the following day embarked for Boston, on board one of the Cunard Company's steamers. He was accompanied by his Secretaries—Captain Higginson, Captain Brownrigg, and Mr. Howell*—and by Dr. W. B. O'Shaughnessy,† who had volunteered to accompany him to Canada.‡ On the 18th of March they touched at Halifax, where the new Governor-General was "kindly received by the Lieutenant-Governor § and his lady;" received addresses from the Council and Assembly of Nova-Scotia, which was a part of his general government, and re-embarked, after being on shore about three hours." On the morning of the 20th he landed at Boston, where he

* Captain Studholme Brownrigg, son of Metcalfe's old friend, Mr. J. S. Brownrigg, accompanied the Governor-General as military secretary; Mr. Howell, a connection by marriage of the Metcalfe family, went as an assistant private secretary.

† Of the Bengal medical service—an officer whose great scientific acquirements have since earned for him a distinguished reputation.

‡ The voyage on the whole was a favourable one; and Metcalfe wrote that he "had abundant reason to be grateful to the Almighty disposer of events." He reported, however, that either from the dampness of the deck or the want of his usual exercise, rheumatism had seized on his right foot and forced him to limp and wear a gouty boot. This explanation is necessary, to render clear some passages in the following letters.

§ Lord Falkland.

was most hospitably received; and on the morning of the 22nd commenced his overland journey to Kingston—all the incidents of which are fully described in the following lively letters to his sister:

SIR CHARLES METCALFE TO MRS. SMYTHE.

"*Albany, State of New York, U.S. America.*
March, 24, 1843.

"MY DEAREST GEORGY,—I wrote from Boston giving an account of our voyage, our landing on the 20th, and our stay on the 21st at that famed place, where the rebellion broke out which ended in the separation of our North-American colonies from the mother country; since which conclusion the original rebellion has been designated the glorious revolution, or the establishment of American independence.

Why treason never prospers, what's the reason?
Why, when it prospers, none dare call it treason.

"Be that as it may, the people of Boston—Governor, Mayor, and grandees—were all very civil and kind. We started, as I said we should, at seven o'clock on the morning of the 22nd, by railway, and arrived at this place about seven in the evening. After quitting the railway, of which the terminus is on the other bank of the Hudson river, we crossed the said river, which was frozen over, on sleighs, which brought us to our hotel, 'the Eagle,' at this place, the whole road being a mass of snow and ice. We started again yesterday, at nine o'clock, by railway, for Senectady, in progress to Utica; but a fresh fall of snow had rendered the road impassable, and we were forced to return after proceeding a few miles. The road is still blocked up, and we could not start again to-day. But we make the attempt again to-morrow, either by railroad at nine o'clock, if that be practicable, or by sleighs at seven o'clock, so as to reach the Utica railroad, at Senectady, which is said to be open, at eleven o'clock; and proceed by railroad from Senectady to Utica, and from Utica to Kingston by sleighs, over the snow and ice and frozen rivers. I will let you know from Kingston how we have managed.

"My foot continues swollen, and I am forced to wear a large cloth boot lined with fur; but in other respects I am well, and so are all the party. When I took my ink out of the box containing my writing materials just now, to commence this scrawl, I found

it frozen; and a newspaper here tells us that the thermometer on the day of our arrival was down at 3°—taken out of our doctor's box to-day it was 17°. Nevertheless, I have not *felt* the cold so much since we landed, or on the voyage, as I did occasionally at Deer Park. It is announced that I am presently to receive a visit from the ex-president of the United States, Mr. Van Buren, the Governor of the State of New York, and a general officer, who is, I presume, the local Commander-in-Chief, and he soon appears. While I was writing, the aforesaid grandees came in—all very civil and kind. Mr. Van Buren, the most distinguished of all, is particularly pleasing. The Governor proposed that he should call again, and drag me forth two hours hence to the 'Capitol', and other public buildings; and as I know not how to decline what was kindly meant, I must submit; although I should be better pleased to remain quietly where I am; for I find it very difficult to keep my footing where every inch is ice or snow. I shall leave this letter to be forwarded from this place, and hope that my next will announce the termination of my journey. I am anxious to relieve Sir Charles Bagot, who is so unwell that I shall not be surprised if I do not find him alive. What we have most to dread is a thaw, which will impede our progress; for the road which we take, in consequence of Lake Ontario's being unnavigable, will be destroyed by a cessation of frost; and our hopes of a speedy and the least uncomfortable journey possible rest on a continuance of severe cold.

"Best love to Mr. S. and Emy.

"Your most affectionate,

"C. T. METCALFE."

THE SAME TO THE SAME.

"*Kingston, Canada, April* 9, 1843.

"MY DEAREST GEORGIANA,—It was from Albany, I think, in the State of New York, that I gave you an account of our journey so far. I have since written a short letter to report safe arrival here. I now resume the account of our journey, taking the first moment that I have been able to apply to that purpose, for business has hitherto been incessant. After being driven back to Albany by the snow-storm that blocked up the railroad on the 23rd March, we waited in vain on the 24th to see if the passage by railway could be effected; and as it was not, we started at daylight on the 25th in sleighs, and proceeded over the snow to Senectady in the hope of finding the railroad from that place open. When

we arrived we found the train gone; for being the train of the preceding day, which had been stopped by the snow, it had started on the 25th at an unusually early hour. We should otherwise have reached Schenectady in time.

"Fortune, however, favoured us that day, for the train was driven back to that place while we were there, which was owing to a train coming from Utica; for there being but one rail, two trains cannot proceed in opposite directions. So we benefited; and the train driven back when it started again took on our party to Utica.

"Our party consisted of nine, seven of ourselves (besides six servants)—one, the mayor of this place, Kingston, a fellow-passenger from England on the steamer, and one a gentleman residing in the United States, but employed by our Government, who made all the arrangements for our journey. The distance from Albany to Utica was ninety miles, and we thought ourselves fortunate in accomplishing it in one day, considering the state of the season and of the road. From Utica to Kingston, distance 127 miles, there was no possible way of travelling otherwise than by sleighs, for the country was entirely under snow, and even that mode was scarcely practicable, owing to the depth of the snow in many places. In ordinary winters, and with an ordinary quantity of snow, the distance would have been got over in a day and a half; but it took us nearly four days. We travelled in covered sleighs, and being wrapped up in fur cloaks, gloves, caps, &c., we were pretty well protected against the cold as long as we could remain in the sleighs; but these vehicles sometimes upset, owing to the yielding depth of snow on one side; and the horses were frequently half-buried in the snow, and had to be extricated; so that from various accidents the active part of our body were frequently called out to exert themselves. I was taken great care of by all.

"The owner of the sleighs, an American, who contracted to convey us to Kingston, attached himself to the sleigh in which I was, and was almost always standing on one side to balance it, and prevent its going over on the other. Allen did the same. He had a seat with the other servants in a covered sleigh, where they were protected from the cold; but I could not persuade him to remain there, and fancying that there was danger of my sleigh's upsetting, he persisted in exposing himself to the elements on the outside of it. I had with me in my sleigh, generally, Higginson, Howell, and either Brownrigg or some other of the party. The

rest of the gentlemen were in another sleigh, and the servants, six in number, or rather five, one having been left with the plate and heavy baggage at Albany, to bring it on after us, were accommodated in a third sleigh.

"The baggage that we had with us was at one time divided between the three—at another, conveyed in a separate sleigh. In this manner we proceed as well as the snow would permit; sometimes a sleigh upsetting—more frequently the horses sinking beyond their depth; and all hands employed to set up the sleigh, or dig out the unfortunate horse. The whole journey, from the novelty of everything, was amusing; and many ludicrous scenes took place. Beyond the track for the sleighs, there was not an inch of ground on which there was not a good chance of being buried in the mass of snow; and in the floundering which took place, when all were out to remedy a difficulty, a gentleman or a servant was often to be seen with his head under the snow and his heels in the air. We were often at a dead stop, and at the best generally made but very slow progress.

"On one occasion, after a long detention in vain efforts to advance, it was decided by our conductor, the American, who took such zealous care of me, that it was impossible to proceed, and that the only plan to be followed was,' that I should be carried on in a light open sleigh, called a 'cutter,' to some place whence assistance could be sent to the party in the rear. My wish was that we should all share the same luck, and I did not like the idea of separation. At last, however, I yielded to the general wish and opinion, and quitted my sleigh to go to the cutter, the only one available. In performing this manœuvre I had to pass the sleighs ahead, which could not be moved out of the track without certain absorption in the snow; and in floundering through the snow to get to the cutter, with many others doing the same in their kind endeavours to help me, the scene was so ridiculous that I was in a roar of laughter the whole way.

"I went on in the cutter with Higginson and Brownrigg, and my American friend, the conductor, besides the driver, to the place, the first on the road whence we could send assistance to our friends behind, and where we stopped for them, and made up our minds to stay the night. It ended in the sleighs all coming up before evening; and along with them Howell, who had been sick that day, and could not quit the covered sleigh. One day we had to cross a bridge, on which an inscription stared us in the face, 'Condemned Bridge;' and as we passed over it, our American

friend opened the door of the sleigh in order that we might have a chance of escape if the sleigh fell through. But the Condemned Bridge was still strong enough for our purpose, and we all got over without accident. Our journey ended in our crossing the river St. Lawrence and Lake Ontario on the ice, both being frozen over, and covered with snow, like the rest of the country. From Boston to Kingston was one mass of snow. The country generally looking like a twelfth-cake—the ground resembling the sugar, and the trees and houses the ornaments. One of the public functionaries said to me at Albany—"Governor Metcalfe, you 'll admit, I think, that this is a clever body of snow for a young country?"

"Both in the United States and here, the season is said to be unexampled as to the duration of the winter. The navigation of the lakes and rivers was open last year in March. This year it will not be before May. They are still frozen, and the ground is still for the most part covered with snow; but it is beginning to melt, and it is well that it should do so gradually, for a sudden and universal thaw would be very mischievous. The cold has been much more tolerable than I expected; and I cannot say that I have yet experienced any so great as that at Deer Park. I understand, however, that with wind it is extremely severe. We shall soon be in summer, for there is scarcely any spring. As yet it continues to freeze every night.

"Nevertheless, although I 'adhere to my habits of having no fire or heat in my bedroom, and of washing all over and bathing my feet in cold water, I do not feel the severe cold as in Devonshire. The damp there, and the want of it here, I conclude make the difference. You would enjoy this climate, and it would, I should think, agree with you. I am disposed to like it, from what I have hitherto experienced. The rheumatism and swelling of the foot which came on on board-ship, and lasted during the journey, have subsided into what they were at Deer Park. And the cold which I caught on the journey has left the head, and is, I trust, going away altogether. I feel in all other respects quite well.

"My official prospects are not better than they were when I accepted the charge that I have undertaken. Party spirit is acrimonious in the extreme. My chief object will be to bring all into harmony; but I do not expect success. I have not the same materials to work on that I had in Jamaica. *Nous verrons.* Several important questions must soon be decided, and the result will most probably draw on me the abuse of one or of both

parties. One incautious step might throw matters into confusion; and even the most proper ones might have the same effect. I must confine myself to generals, for it would take a volume to describe the particulars of the difficulties in which I find myself. I do not mean, however, to give way to despair; and I do not suffer from low spirits. I rather think that, in that respect, the climate is favourable; for, notwithstanding much discouragement from the aspect of affairs, I am in good spirits, although incessant business prevents my taking any exercise. I have not been out of the house once for that purpose since I arrived. My health is nevertheless excellent. All our party are well, excepting some colds and some rheumatism. Higginson is the chief sufferer now from the latter. Frank Howell is quite well, and is growing in my affections. My predecessor, Sir Charles Bagot, a very amiable man, continues in a precarious, though not a hopeless state; and owing to the lakes not being navigable, cannot at present be moved. I am, consequently, living in a hired house in the town; and most of my party at an hotel—two only, all that the house can hold, being with me; as I could not think of disturbing Sir Charles Bagot, and Lady Mary and their family, by occupying Government House while they remain. Although I could not with any propriety have done otherwise, they have taken this little consideration very kindly, and express themselves very warmly on the subject. I enclose some scraps taken from newspapers. Some may interest, and others amuse you.

"When I get into the Government House I will give you a description of our mode of life. Not being in my present residence in a condition to entertain, I avoid it entirely. This privilege, however, will only last as long as I stay out of the Government House. My establishment will be larger and more expensive than it was in Jamaica. My official income is less. And as there it was not sufficient without aid from my private fortune, I must of course expect the same will be the case here, to a larger extent. This, however, is a matter of little consequence; and I wish that all others could be as easily managed. I shall keep this open to say all's well at the time of despatch. It has been written at various times, as I could snatch moments for the purpose.

"It is now April the 13th. I took charge of the Government on the 30th of March. I had nearly forgotten my face. It is much as it was when I parted from you. The doctor is at present attacking it *daily*, but gently, with nitric acid and arsenic. Whether the effect will be more complete than it was before, time

will show. God bless you, my dearest sister. Deer Park must be beginning to be delightful. When I think how happy I was and should have been there, and afterwards at Stoke Gifford, it requires the conviction that I have acted according to duty to reconcile me to the sacrifice that I have made. God grant that we may all meet again, and enjoy a renewal of the same happiness.

"Your affectionate,

"C. T. METCALFE."

He arrived at Kingston on the afternoon of the 29th of March. The streets were lined with troops, and the whole male population of the place turned out to greet him.* If the enthusiasm with which he was received could have soothed his anxieties, he would have derived solace from these demonstrations—but he knew, as he passed along the streets of Kingston, that there was a period of trouble and excitement before him. On the following day he was sworn in as Governor-General of the Canadas and their dependencies.

* The following passage of a letter, written at the time by a newspaper correspondent, describes the manner of Metcalfe's reception:—"Sir Charles Metcalfe arrived about half an hour ago. He came from the American side, in a close-bodied sleigh drawn by four greys. He was received, on arriving at the foot of Arthur-street (Ives' Wharf), by an immense concourse of people. The military escort was composed of a detachment of the Incorporated Lancers, and the guard of honour from the 23rd Regiment. Notwithstanding the repeated disappointments as to the time of the arrival, the male population of the place turned out *en masse* to greet Sir Charles, which they did with great enthusiasm. The various branches of the Fire Department, the Mechanics' Institution, and the National Societies, turned out with their banners, which, with many sleighs decorated with flags, made quite a show. The streets from Daley's Hotel to the Governor's residence were lined by the military. Sir Charles, after a turn through two or three streets, from the place of his landing, accompanied by the procession, went to his residence. Sir Charles Metcalfe is a thorough-looking Englishman, with a jolly visage. He looks older than he really is, but this may proceed from the fatigues of his very rough journey."

CHAPTER XIV.

[1843—1845.]

THE GOVERNMENT OF CANADA.

The Canadian Constitution—Responsible Government—How to be Interpreted—State of Parties—The Executive Council—Beginning of Difficulties—Rupture with the Council—Provincial Addresses—Formation of a New Council—General Election—The New Session—Metcalfe's Difficulties.

And now Sir Charles Metcalfe began to look the difficulties of his position fairly in the face. They were great; and he scarcely hoped to overcome them. But he addressed himself to his work in a quiet, resolute spirit, with the calm consciousness of a man knowing that he was about to do his best, in all honesty and sincerity, and that there were no personal considerations to cause him to swerve one hair's breath from the path of duty. He had not come to Canada to serve himself—but to serve the State. If he failed, therefore, his failure would be forced upon him; it would not be self-incurred.

The more closely he looked at the difficulties before him, the more formidable they appeared to be. He found, indeed, that they were far greater and more complicated than those which he had overcome, by the mere force of an honest purpose and a conciliatory spirit, on the distracted West-Indian island. They were formidable because they were only to be subdued either by evolving a crisis, which for a time must have convulsed the colony, or by a sacrifice of principle to which it was not in the nature of such a

man to submit. The party-spirit which was raging Jamaica on his arrival startled the Indian Governor. He said that it was impossible to conciliate one party without offending another. But in Canada the curse of faction appeared before him so swollen and exaggerated, that he wondered the evils with which he had contended during his former Government had ever disquieted him at all.

His first care on establishing himself in Kingston was to make himself thoroughly acquainted with the character of the Government over which he was commissioned to preside. He found in Canada a Legislature embracing, as in Jamaica, three constituent parts :—the Governor, or representative of the Crown; the Legislative Council, nominated by the Crown; and the Representative Assembly, elected by the people. But there was a very important difference, in respect of the manner in which the Government was practically administered, between the West-Indian island and the North-American province; for whereas in the former the Legislative and Executive Council was one, and the office-holders of whom it was composed retained their places during good conduct, in the latter there was a separate Executive Council, holding office virtually by the sufferance of the popular branch of the Legislature, though nominally appointed by the Crown. This Executive Council was composed of members of both Houses—principally of the Lower House, to which they declared themselves directly responsible.

This, in fact, was that Responsible Government of which subsequently so much was heard in all discussions on Canadian affairs. The responsibility was the responsibility of the Executive Council to a majority in the House of Assembly. They professed to govern the province through that majority. They represented, indeed, the representatives of the people, and, therefore, governed through and for the community. So far was this theory of Responsible

Government sufficiently sound—but when it came to be reduced to practice there were some obtrusive difficulties in the way of its successful application. And among the most difficult questions which suggested themselves was this—What, under such a state of things, was to become of the Governor-General?

This question filled Metcalfe's mind; and when he addressed himself to its solution, it was natural that he should have considered, in the first instance, how his predecessors had dealt with the difficulties which he was now called upon to encounter. The name of responsible government was, at all events, nothing new to the North-American Colonies. It had been talked of by Lord Durham; and tried by Lord Sydenham and Sir Charles Bagot—how and with what result the new Governor-General now clearly described, on the 24th of April, in his first confidential despatch to the Colonial Office:

"Lord Durham's meaning," he wrote, "seems to have been that the Governor should conduct his administration in concordance with the public feeling, represented by the popular branch of the Legislature, and it is obvious that without such concordance the Government could not be successfully administered. There is no evidence in what manner Lord Durham would have carried out the system which he advocated, as it was not brought into effect during his administration. Lord Sydenham arranged the details by which the principle was carried into execution. In forming the Executive Council he made it a rule that the individuals comprising it should be members of the popular branch of the legislature, to which I believe there was only one exception; the gentleman appointed to be president being a member of the Legislative Council. Lord Sydenham had apparently no intention of surrendering the government into the hands of the Executive Council. On the contrary, he ruled the Council, and exercised great personal influence in the election of members to the Representative Assembly. . . . . I am not aware that any great change took place, during that period of the administration of Sir Charles Bagot which preceded the meeting of the Legisla-

ture—but this event was instantly followed by a full development of the consequences of making the officers of the Government virtually dependent for the possession of their places on the pleasure of the representative body. The two extreme parties in Upper Canada most violently opposed to each other coalesced solely for the purpose of turning out the office-holders, or, as it is now termed, the Ministry of that day, with no other bond of union, and with a mutual understanding that having accomplished that purpose, they would take the chance of the consequences, and should be at liberty to follow their respective courses. The French party also took part in this coalition, and from its compactness and internal reunion formed its greatest strength. Those parties together accomplished their joint purpose. They had expected to do so by a vote of the Assembly, but in that they were anticipated by the Governor-General, who, in apprehension of the threatened vote of want of confidence in members of his Council, opened negotiations with the leaders of the French party, and that negotiation terminated in the resignation or removal from the Council of those members who belonged to what is called by themselves the Conservative party, and in the introduction of five members of the United French and Reform parties. The remaining members of the Council were either of the so-called Reform party, or if not formerly of that party, were willing to fight under its banners. . . . . The events were regarded by all parties in the country as establishing in full force the system of responsible government of which the practical execution had before been incomplete. . . . . From that time, the tone of the members of the Council and the tone of the public voice regarding responsible government has been greatly exalted. The Council are now spoken of by themselves and others generally as 'the Ministers,' 'the Administration,' 'the Cabinet,' 'the Government,' and so forth. Their pretensions are according to this new nomenclature. They regard themselves as a responsible Ministry, and expect that the policy and conduct of the Governor shall be subservient to their views and party purposes."

On the 12th of May, writing again to the Colonial Office on the same subject, Metcalfe declared that the question of responsible government, as construed by the Council, was now about, for the first time, to be put fairly on

its trial, and that the "tug of war" was about to commence:—

"*Now*, I conceive," he said, "is the first time when the scheme of responsible government, as here construed, has come forward to be carried fully into effect in any colony. Lord Durham had no difficulty in writing at leisure in praise of responsible government, which had no effect during his administration, and was treated by him as a general question, without any definition of the details by which it was to be carried into effect. Lord Sydenham put the idea in force without suffering himself to be much restrained by it; and for the greater part of his administration it had no existence, and was only coming into operation when he died. Sir Charles Bagot yielded to the coercive effect of Lord Sydenham's arrangements; and thence responsible government, as understood by its extreme advocates, is said to be Sir Charles Bagot's policy; but though he yielded to the extent of calling certain parties into his Council, he had not the least intent of surrendering his power into their hands; and for the remainder of his time the contest was staved off by his illness; but that very cause rendered it more certain for his successor. Now comes the tug of war, and supposing absolute submission to be out of the question, I cannot say that I see the end of the struggle if the parties alluded to really mean to maintain it."

Such were the manifestations of the Responsible Government over which Metcalfe was called upon to preside—not in any sense as a Governor, but wholly and solely as a name. The illness of Sir Charles Bagot, which had for some time totally incapacitated him from performing the duties of his office, had afforded an opportunity to the Executive Council of carrying out unrestrained their own ideas of responsible government, and, under circumstances so favourable to its development, they had run a course of unchecked usurpation. It is not improbable that but for the visitation of Providence which soon sent Sir Charles Bagot to his grave, there would in time have been a collision between him and his Council—but as it was, nothing had happened to break the shock, and Metcalfe now felt that it would be his to bear the brunt of all the heady

opposition which had been acquiring strength during the reigns of his predecessors.

To the reader accustomed to the spectacle of a Responsible Government in England—that is, a Government dependent for its existence on the suffrages of a majority in the Representative Assembly—a Government, indeed, propped and supported by a party in the House of Commons—there may, at first, appear to be nothing extraordinary in the position in which Sir Charles Metcalfe now found himself; and nothing very formidable in the difficulties which surrounded him. The Government of England was the Government of a party. Every Government in which the representative element preponderates is necessarily the Government of a party. But at the nominal head of this Government-by-a-party in England was the wearer of a crown, who might be a child, a woman, or an imbecile old man; not expected to do, but to be—whilst at the head of this Responsible Government, or Government-by-a-party, in Canada, was one of the ablest statesmen that the mother country could send forth—a delegate, indeed, selected on account of his moral and intellectual fitness for the post of the chief ruler of our North American possessions. It might be in accordance with the spirit and the practice of the British constitution that the Sovereign should be a cypher; but it was not in accordance with the spirit or the practice of colonial Government that the Governor of a colony should be one. If, then, responsible government, as construed by the dominant party in Canada, was thenceforth to be brought into full operation, the great question, as I have said, which remained to be solved, was, "What was to become of the Governor-General?"

Now, government-by-a-party might be a very good thing; and the Governor-Generalship might be a very good thing. But it appeared to Sir Charles Metcalfe that

the two institutions were incompatible with each other. To assimilate and amalgamate them it was necessary either that the nominal head of the Government, whatever designation he might bear, should be a mere cypher—a seal—existing and not doing; or that he should be practically one, the chief of the Ministry, identifying himself with the party to which he is attached, and rising or falling with that party. Under such a system of responsible government, the nominal head of the administration might be either what the King or the Premier is in England. But Metcalfe now found that he was expected to be something which, as far as his own knowledge extended, was utterly without a prototype in the constitutional history of the world.

It was said by some who, at this time, looked quietly on whilst the principle of responsible government was developing itself in Canada, that thenceforth it would be the duty of the Governor-General to lead the Ministry, and that coming with the prestige of high authority and a made reputation, as well as with the weight, in all probability, of superior talents and more extensive administrative experience, he would be able, in a little time, to mould the opinions and to shape the measures of his Council. There is something at least plausible in this; and if Metcalfe had seen his way to such a solution of the question, he would eagerly have seized the means of extricating himself from the difficulties by which he was surrounded. But the opinion, although that of practical men, had little but theory, after all, to recommend it. Doubtless, Metcalfe smiled complacently at the idea of his leading such a Council under such circumstances; and turned from the contemplation of this pleasant picture of the *entente cordiale* between a moderate and a ductile Council and mild paternal Governor to the menacing reality before him.

He was called upon to govern, or to submit to the government of Canada, by a party; and the party by which he was to govern was one with which he had no sympathy. It was rather a combination of parties than a single faction—a combination of two parties, the principles of neither of which Metcalfe could bring himself to approve. He had some conception of the state of parties in the province, before he set his foot on Canadian soil; but he had no clear knowledge of the extent to which party-spirit was eating into the very life of the colony, or of the embarrassment which must beset him as soon as ever he attempted to do justice to all classes and conditions of men, irrespectively of the factions to which they belonged.* But now that he came to take account of the obstacles to success, he found that they were far greater than he anticipated when he accepted the offer of the Government. He found that however potent might have been the watchword of "Reconciliation" in Jamaica, in Canada it could avail him nothing to allay animosities and to engender peace.

He found that there were three parties in the colony, and more than three races of men. He found that there was a loyal Conservative party; a Liberal, or Reform, party; and a French-Canadian party.† The first was

* "The violence of party spirit," he wrote to the Home Government on the 25th of April, "forces itself on one's notice immediately on arrival in the colony; and threatens to be the source of all the difficulties which are likely to impede the successful administration of the Government for the welfare and happiness of the country."

† "The parties," wrote Metcalfe, "into which the community is divided, are—the French-Canadian party, the Reform party, and the Conservative party; I use the names by which the parties designate themselves. The Reform party are by their opponents branded as Republicans and rebels, and the Conservatives by theirs as Tories and Orangemen. . . . . The French

composed principally of Englishmen; the second, of Englishmen, Irishmen, and people of American stock; the third consisted entirely of the old French settlers, who since the union of the two Canadas had been gradually rising in importance. It was only among the first of these three parties that loyalty, as signifying attachment to the mother country, existed in any force. It was only, therefore, with that party that Metcalfe, as the representative of the Imperial Government, could properly sympathise. But that party was the Opposition of the day. The Reformers and the French-Canadians constituted the majority in the Representative Assembly, and, therefore, the Executive Council—the Responsible Government—which Metcalfe found in the province was composed of the leading men of those two radical parties.

The difficulty of managing all these discordant parties without a Council Metcalfe might have overcome; but the interposition of the Council rendered the work almost an impossibility. Determined, as far as he could, to abstain from identifying himself with any party, and to render equal justice to all, he still felt that the very catholicity which he desired to infuse into his administration, might become in itself a new source of difficulty and embarrassment. "The course which I intend to pursue," he wrote, soon after he had assumed the charge of the Government, "with regard to all parties, is to treat all alike, and to make no distinctions as far as depends on my personal

party is the strongest, from being thoroughly united and acting together almost as one man. Unless any question were to arise which would unite the discordant English parties in a common feeling, the French party, from its compactness, could influence the votes of the Assembly more than any other." This party had only recently risen into power. It had before been excluded from office; but under the administration of Sir C. Bagot had been admitted to its share of the responsible offices of the State, including seats in the Executive Council.

conduct, unless I discover, which I do not at present, that principles and motives are concerned which render a different course proper." But he presently added:

"If I had a fair open field, I should endeavour to conciliate and bring together the good men of all parties, and to win the confidence and co-operation of the legislative bodies by measures calculated to promote the general welfare in accordance with public feeling; but fettered as I am by the necessity of acting with a Council brought into place by a coalition of parties, and at present in possession of a decided majority in the Representative Assembly, I must, in some degree, forego my own inclinations in those respects; although I may still strive as a mediator to allay the bitterness of party spirit. Even the hope of this may be short-lived, for any measure that can be construed into indicating the adoption of the supposed policy of the party in the Council, will excite the animosity of the excluded party against me personally, so as to destroy such usefulness on my part even in that little degree. It is, however, an advantage of the present system that opposition to the Council need not be regarded as opposition to the Governor, as long as the Council is virtually nominated by the Representative Assembly, and that opposition to the local administration, ever when the Governor is an object of attack, need not be considered as opposition to her Majesty's Government."

The system of universal toleration which Metcalfe prescribed to himself as his rule of conduct, was not likely to find favour in the eyes of the zealous partizans who composed his Executive Council. In the composition of that Council, indeed, when he came to examine it, he found not the least of the difficulties which beset his career. He found that there were some able and some honest men in the administration; but that there was a great want of moderation among them; that they were, for the most part, men of extreme opinions, and some of them of intractable temper. Where there was strong conscientiousness, there was a vehemence almost bordering on fanaticism; where there was most ground for respect, there was also most cause of alarm. They were princi-

pally Irishmen, French-Canadians, or men of American stock. The true British element in the Executive Council was comparatively small.

The President of the Council was Mr. Sullivan, an Irishman by birth and a lawyer by profession, a man who, if he had united consistency of political conduct and weight of personal character with the great and original talents which he unquestionably possessed, might have taken a conspicuous part in the public affairs of any country. His abilities had been highly esteemed by Lord Sydenham, under whose tutelage he had become a Liberal. To Sir Charles Metcalfe he was described as the best writer and the best speaker in the colony—but there the commendation ceased. Mr. Daly, the Secretary of State, or "Provincial Secretary" for Lower Canada, was a man of a very different stamp. He, also, was an Irishman—and he was a Roman Catholic; but although for the latter reason his sympathies were strongly with the French-Canadian people, or had been, so long as they were oppressed by the dominant race, his feelings, the growth of education and early association, were of a Conservative and aristocratic cast. All Metcalfe's informants represented him to be a man of high honour and integrity; of polished manners and courteous address; a good specimen of an Irish gentleman. It was added, that he was possessed of judgment and prudence—tact and discretion; in short, a man to be trusted. But he was not a public speaker; and, therefore, wanted weight in the Representative Assembly. Of that Assembly, Mr. Harrison, an English lawyer,* Provincial Secretary for Upper Canada, was nominally the "leader." He had some years before emigrated to the colony to better his fortunes by agricultural pursuits, but had become private secretary to Sir George Arthur, and subsequently, under Lord Sydenham's

* Author of "Harrison's Digest."

administration, was appointed to a seat in the Executive Council. It was said of him, that he was "a person very difficult to describe, from want of salient points of character." His qualities were for the most part of a negative description. Unassuming and unaffected, making no display of his talents, he still got through his business in such a manner as to justify a belief in their existence. But although his character was not clearly defined, his political opinions were; and his Liberalism was at least undoubted.

Of a character and a temperament wholly opposite to those of the leader of the House of Assembly was Mr. Morin, a French-Canadian, Commissioner of Crown Lands. He had been thrown in early life, by the troubles of his country, into the stormy sea of politics, but, I believe, had followed the law as a profession. His character, as described to Metcalfe, would have fitted well the hero of a romance. With administrative abilities of the highest class, vast powers of application, and an extreme love of order, he united a rare conscientiousness and a noble self-devotion, which in old times would have carried him cheerfully to the stake. His patriotism was of the purest water. He was utterly without selfishness and guile. And he was of so sensitive a nature, and so confiding a disposition, that it was said of him, he was as tender-hearted as a woman and as simple as a child. But for these—the infirmities only of noble minds—he might have been a great statesman. If the enthusiasm and demonstrativeness of his character rendered him a striking contrast to Secretary Harrison, he was in these and other respects also remarkably dissimilar to Mr. Receiver-General Dunn—an Englishman of no great acuteness of perception or ardour of patriotism, equally wanting in the steadier qualities of order and precision; whilst, in his devotion to the science of politics, the earnest French-Canadian put to shame

another of his colleagues, Mr. Killaly, an Irishman, the Inspector of Public Works, who was anxious for nothing so much as to escape entirely out of the political arena, and to devote himself exclusively to the practical duties of his department.

Mr. Small and Mr. Aylwyn, both natives of the province, and of American origin, were the Solicitors-General for Upper and Lower Canada. The former was described as a well-intentioned man, of more than average respectability and honour; whilst the latter bore the reputation of the best debater in the Assembly—a man of infinite adroitness and lawyer-like sagacity, skilled in making the worse appear the better reason, and exposing the weakness of an adversary's case. He had rendered essential service to the French-Canadians in the time of their utmost need, and had been brought into the Council through the influence of that party. But there was, in reality, little in common between them; and it was said that the connection gave no great satisfaction to the old clients of the Solicitor-General.

The Inspector-General of Accounts, or Chief Finance-Minister, was Mr. Hincks. He was in many respects a remarkable man. The son of an eminent Irish divine, he had settled in Canada many years before, and had devoted himself to literary pursuits. The literature which he cultivated was the literature of politics. He became editor and proprietor of a leading Liberal journal, the *Toronto Examiner*. The ability with which he conducted the paper rendered it a formidable political organ. From this condition of colonial journalist, the influence of which in troubled times is not to be estimated by the social position it confers, he was elevated to high official rank by Sir Charles Bagot. Even the most strenuous of his opponents admitted his fitness for the office he held. He was an excellent accountant and financier. It was repre-

sented to Sir Charles Metcalfe that he was by far the best man of business in the Council—clear-headed, methodical, persevering, and industrious. But as a partisan he was vehement and unscrupulous; with a tongue that cut like a sword, and no discretion to keep it in order.

The two foremost men in the Council remain yet to be noticed—Mr. Lafontaine and Mr. Baldwin, the Attorneys-General for Lower and Upper Canada. The former was a French-Canadian and the leader of his party in the Colonial Legislature, as he had been, since Papineau's retirement, the leader of his people, before they had been permitted to take part in the Councils of the State. All his better qualities were natural to him; his worse were the growth of circumstances. Cradled, as he and his people had been, in wrong, smarting for long years under the oppressive exclusiveness of the dominant race, he had become mistrustful and suspicious; and the doubts which were continually floating in his mind had naturally engendered indecision and infirmity of purpose. But he had many fine characteristics which no evil circumstances could impair. He was a just and an honourable man. His motives were above all suspicion. Warmly attached to his country, earnestly seeking the happiness of his people, he occupied a high position by the force rather of his moral than of his intellectual qualities. He was trusted and respected rather than admired. As the leader of an important and an united party he occupied a large space in the eyes of the public; and without any particular fitness for such prominent action, was now about to take a conspicuous part in the great events which were rapidly developing themselves.

A far abler and more energetic man was Mr. Robert Baldwin—the son of a gentleman of Toronto, of Irish descent, who had formerly been a member of what was called the "Family Compact." The elder Baldwin had

quarrelled with his party, and with the characteristic bitterness of a renegade had brought up his son in extremest hatred of his old associates, and had instilled into him the most radical opinions. Robert Baldwin was an apt pupil; and there was much in the circumstances by which he was surrounded—in the unfortunate misgovernment of his country, in the oppressive exclusiveness of a dominant faction, and in the political convulsions which it had engendered—to rivet him in the extreme opinions which he had imbibed in his youth. So he grew up to be an enthusiast—almost a fanatic. He was thoroughly in earnest; thoroughly conscientious; but he was to the last degree uncompromising and intolerant. He seemed to delight in strife. The might of mildness he laughed to scorn. It was said of him, that he was not satisfied with a victory unless it was gained by violence—that concessions were valueless to him unless he wrenched them with a strong hand from his opponent. With strong convictions and stern self-reliance, he made no allowances for others, and sought none for himself. There was a sort of sublime egotism about him—a magnificent self-esteem, which caused him to look upon himself as a patriot, whilst he was serving his own ends by the promotion of his ambition, or by the gratification of his vanity or spite. His strong passions and his uncompromising spirit made him a mischievous party-leader and a dangerous opponent. His influence was very great. He was not a mean man; he was above corruption; and there were many who accepted his estimate of himself, and believed him to be the only pure patriot in the country. During the illness of Sir Charles Bagot he had usurped the Government. The activity of Sir Charles Metcalfe, who did everything for himself, and exerted himself to keep every one in his proper place, was extremely distasteful to him. He did not understand the character of the man who had been

sent to govern them; and it would have been strange, indeed, if one so blinded by passion and self-esteem, and so intolerant of opposition, had not soon wrought himself into a state of furious antagonism to the Governor-General.

Such, as represented to Metcalfe—such, as, on further experience, he subsequently had good reason for believing them to be—were the members of the Executive Council who now desired to put their own construction upon the principles of Responsible Government, which had been admitted by the Imperial authority, and which Metcalfe himself cheerfully accepted. Canada, at the best of times, was not a good nursery for statesmen. The union of political ability and political integrity was very rare in the colony. Impartial men, not greatly admiring the individual members of the Council, were yet fain to acknowledge that it would be difficult to compose a better Ministry. Metcalfe himself accepted it as he found it, and said he did not see any possibility of making a change for the better. On the 24th of April he wrote to the Colonial Secretary:

"Hitherto nothing disagreeable has occurred in my communication with the Council, or with the several individuals of which it is composed. Their views and mine correspond on several questions. They are, generally, able men. Several of them are influential. I do not perceive that any benefit would arise from any practicable change. The point in which I most proximately expect to incur a difference with them is their claim that the Government shall be administered in subserviency to their party views. They expect that the patronage of the Government shall be bestowed exclusively on members of their party, and in support of their influence. . . . . I dislike extremely the notion of governing as a supporter of any particular party. I wish to make the patronage of the Government conducive to the conciliation of all parties, by bringing into the public service the men of the greatest merit and efficiency, without any party distinction. My powers of usefulness, little as they might be under any circumstances, will be paralysed by my being forced in any degree to act as the supporter of a party."

And, again, in the same letter, he alluded to his expectations and intentions, and spoke of the encroachments which he apprehended:

"The general course which I purpose to pursue towards the Council, is to treat them with the confidence and cordiality due to the station which they occupy; to consult them not only whenever the law or established usage requires that process, but also whenever the importance of the occasion recommends it; and whenever I conceive that the public service will be benefited by their aid and advice. At the same time, I must be on my guard against their encroachments."

A week or two afterwards, the encroachments which he apprehended had commenced. Lafontaine and Baldwin were endeavouring to usurp the Government, and to reduce the Governor-General to a mere passive instrument in their hands. Already had the former threatened resignation. A cloud of difficulties was gathering darkly over his head. On the 12th of May he wrote to Lord Stanley:

"I learn that my attempts to conciliate all parties are criminal in the eyes of the Council, or at least of the most formidable member of it. I am required to give myself up entirely to the Council; to submit absolutely to their dictation; to have no judgment of my own; to bestow the patronage of the Government exclusively on their partisans; to proscribe their opponents; and to make some public and unequivocal declaration of my adhesion to those conditions—including the complete nullification of her Majesty's Government—a course, which, under self-deception, he denominates Sir Charles Bagot's policy, although it is very certain that Sir Charles Bagot meant no such thing. Failing of submission to those stipulations, I am threatened with the resignation of Mr. Lafontaine for one, and both he and I are fully aware of the serious consequences likely to follow the execution of that menace, from the blindness with which the French-Canadian party follow their leader. . . . . I am disposed to hope that further reflection may cool his ardour, and that I may derive some advantage from the aid of time. I need hardly say, that although I see the necessity for caution, I have no intention of

tearing up her Majesty's commission by submitting to the prescribed conditions.

"The sole question is, to describe it without disguise, whether the Governor shall be solely and completely a tool in the hands of the Council, or whether he shall have any exercise of his own judgment in the administration of the Government? Such a question has not come forward as a matter of discussion; but there is no doubt that the leader of the French party speaks the sentiments of others of his Council besides himself.

As I cannot possibly adopt them, I must be prepared for the consequences of a rupture with the Council, or at least the most influential portion of it. It would be very imprudent on my part to hasten such an event, or to allow it to take place under present circumstances, if it can be avoided—but I must expect it, for I cannot consent to be the tool of a party, and to proscribe all those who defended their cunoty in the hour of need against foreign invasion and internal rebellion. I am an advocate for entire forgetfulness of past offences against the State; but it is provoking to find that those who claim amnesty for rebels and brigands, with whom to a certain extent they sympathised, are inveterate in their hostility to those who were faithful to their Sovereign and country. The amnesty ought at least to be reciprocal.

. . . . . Government by a majority is the explanation of responsible government given by the leader in this movement, and government without a majority must be admitted to be ultimately impracticable. But the present question—and the one which is coming on for trial in my administration, is not whether the Governor shall so conduct his Government as to meet the wants and wishes of the people, and obtain their suffrages by promoting their welfare and happiness—nor whether he shall be responsible for his measures to the people, through their representatives—but whether he shall, or shall not, have a voice in his own Council; whether he shall be at liberty to treat all her Majesty's subjects with equal justice, or be a reluctant and passive tool in the hands of a party for the purpose of proscribing their opponents—those opponents being the portion of the community most attached to British connection; and the Governor required to proscribe them being a British Governor. The tendency and object of this movement is to throw off the government of the mother-country in internal affairs entirely—but to be maintained and supported at her expense, and to have all the advantages of connection, as long as it may suit the majority of the people of Canada to

endure it. This is a very intelligible and very convenient policy for a Canadian aiming at independence, but the part that the representative of the mother-country is required to perform in it is by no means fascinating."

From these passages may be gathered a clear conception of the causes which, as the year advanced, threatened to precipitate a collision between Sir Charles Metcalfe and the members of his Council. It was not a question of responsible government as understood either by Lord Durham who had suggested, by Lord John Russell who had sanctioned, or by the Assembly which had declared in favour of the system. It was a question of responsible government as the Lafontaine-and-Baldwin Council chose to misconstrue the original intent both of the Imperial and the Colonial Legislature. Their idea of responsible government was the government of a Council supported by the dominant party in the Representative Assembly, with a Governor-General employed by them as a mere passive instrument in their hands. To govern through a party was one thing—to surrender everything to a party was another.

That Metcalfe entertained a strong personal dislike to any form of party government is true; but he saw the necessity of such government in Canada, and whatever may have been the habits of his mind, or whatever the antecedents of his public life, he was not a man obstinately to adhere to old systems, or to transplant to the West opinions or sentiments applicable only to the institutions of the East. It was easy to say of him, that he was an Oriental despot; that he was not accustomed to representative government; and that he could not bring himself to appreciate or to act in harmony with popular assemblies. But he was no bigot; and he was no fool. He admitted the necessity of governing the Canadian provinces through a majority in the House of Assembly. He said,

indeed, it was impossible to govern in any other way; but he did not conceive that it was necessary to the harmonious working of such a system of government, that he should entirely surrender the prerogative of the Crown.

It was said that the real source of the antagonism between Metcalfe and his Council was to be found in the personal character of the former. And so, undoubtedly, it was. There was no more prominent feature in his character than a strong sense of duty to the State, unless it were a still stronger sense of universal justice. Perhaps, in the single quality of conscientiousness, both characteristics are included. By the Lafontaine-and-Baldwin Council, Metcalfe was called upon to violate both his duty to the Government which employed him, and his sense of universal justice. He was called upon to surrender the prerogative of the Crown, and to do a sweeping injustice to the Colony. He was the last person in the world to endeavour to ride rough-shod over local institutions. It was always his desire to act with the colonial authorities—to confide in and conciliate them. Against the encroachments of the Imperial Government he had always protested.* He believed that it was his duty, as it was his pleasure, to guide the Councils of the Colony, not forcibly

* See Metcalfe's remonstrance against undue interference with the independence of the Jamaica Assembly. "The only question is," he wrote to the Colonial Office, "how good can best be accomplished—whether by riding rough-shod over the island institutions, and knocking down right-and-left everything that stands in one's way; or by cordially co-operating with the island authorities, legislative and executive, profiting by their good feelings, taking them by the hand and leading them gently to every desired improvement, respecting their just rights as well as those of others, and above all, by not suspecting and distrusting them? The latter is the course which naturally presented itself to me."

to control them by any undue exercise of his prerogative as the representative of the Crown. He had rightly said in Jamaica, that "when the two giants, Privilege and Prerogative, have been roused to a combat, it is hard to say where it will terminate;" but this combat was now about to commence.

It was not provoked or invited by Prerogative. Metcalfe neither attempted nor desired to ride rough-shod over the Canadian Council. The Council endeavoured to ride rough-shod over him; to grind him down into the dust of utter annihilation. Not only was it their desire to deprive him of all controlling power as the representative of the Crown, to deny his right to be considered as the chief member of the Council, and to reduce him to the level of one of themselves, but they desired and they endeavoured to prevent him from having any voice in the Council at all. They were not satisfied to stop short of an entire usurpation of the authority of the Governor-General. They were eager to reduce him to the mere shadow of a name.

It has been before observed, that as Metcalfe was no usurper himself, so he would not suffer the usurpation of others. His strong sense of public duty kept him always in his right place, and made him resolute to keep others also in their right places. He had the strongest possible assurance that he had not been sent out to Canada to be the tool of a party—and that party the one least favourable to the interests of the mother country. Eager as he was for conciliation, he still felt that if he could conciliate the Council only by a base surrender of the right of the Crown, it was his duty, whatever it might cost him, to abide the consequences of a collision. He saw plainly that things were tending to this pass. And he was the more resolute not to avoid it by any unbecoming concessions, because he saw with equal distinctness that the question which would precipitate it was not less a question

of justice than a question of prerogative. The question was, whether all the patronage of the colony should be surrendered to the greed of party—whether the just claims of individuals and the general well-being of the province should be sacrificed, whilst Baldwin and Lafontaine were strengthening the hands of the Council by an unscrupulous purchase of votes?

In this question of patronage all the manifold curses of the bitter party-spirit which was rending the island found outward expression. Nothing could have more clearly indicated the terrible extent to which this foul disease was corrupting the very life-blood of the colony.

At the accumulation of difficulties thus engendered Metcalfe now looked with feelings almost approaching to despair. In reply to a friend in England, who had sent him a practical suggestion of some value, he wrote on the 15th of July:

"I wish that successful Government depended on such matters, or could be in any degree promoted by due attention to French-Canadian rank. There are much more serious difficulties which nothing seems likely to surmount—the mutual antipathy of races, which time alone will subdue; the still hotter antipathy of reformers, as they call themselves—or republicans and rebels, as they are called by their opponents—on the one hand; and constitutionalists or conservatives, as they call themselves—or tories and family-compact men, as they are called by their adversaries on the other; the hostile virulence of Orangemen and Repealers, imported into this country from the hot-bed of faction, and forming a new source of mischief; the disappointment attending the Union; the impossibility of reconciling Upper Canadians to the fixing of the seat of Government in Lower Canada; and *vice versâ* as to the Lower Canadians, with respect to Upper Canada; the probability of attempts to dissolve the Union; the no hope of good in either repealing or maintaining it; my own dislike to governing by or with a party; and the difficulty, if not the impossibility of avoiding it. These are the difficulties which beset my path; and so hopeless is the prospect of either public good or personal credit, that I should have considered myself as fully

justified in declining what I never invited, had I known the real state of things when I accepted the office. I cannot now throw off with propriety. If equal love and desire to do justice to all without distinction would suffice to secure contentment, I should not despair—but party-spirit runs too high. The wars of the ins and outs will continue to rage. In short, the chance of keeping those discordant materials in union and peace is hopeless; and I have made up my mind to utter failure. My determination is to do what seems to be right and practicable, and to take the consequence—but hope I have none, not even of escape. If I could conscientiously say, 'The thing is to be done, but I can't do it,' I should then be able to resign and make way for another; but as it is, I do not feel myself at liberty to cast the burden on any other, and must toil on to no purpose in the Slough of Despond.—Enough of this disheartening subject!"*

Not the least of the difficulties here glanced at was that involved in the question then before him of the location of the seat of Government. Since the union of the two Canadas this had been a continual source of party-strife and local irritation; and Metcalfe had strong apprehensions that, whatever might be the solution of it, a revolution would be the result of the decision. All through the year the question pressed heavily on his mind. At the end of April he had written to the Colonial Secretary:

"My own opinion concurs with that of the Council. It appears to me that Montreal is decidedly the fittest place to form the capital of the United Province of Canada. It is not only the principal place in population, wealth, and commerce; but it is also the only place where the English and French races can amalgamate. Kingston is a foreign land to the French-Canadians; except the few gentlemen who as office-holders are drawn by

* In this letter, alluding to the last news from India, Metcalfe says: "With the exception of our military exploits, I do not like our proceedings in Sindh. If I understand them aright, they have been a series of encroachment from the commencement of our negotiation for opening the navigation of the Indus—a laudable object, if it could have been accomplished without destroying the independence of another state."

their duties to the seat of Government, if scarcely contains a single inhabitant of that race. . . . . If there were any place in choosing which the feelings of Upper and Lower Canadians would unite, that would be a motive for selection which would in my opinion, overrule every other. But that is out of the question. Place the capital in Upper Canada, and the Lower Canadians will be dissatisfied. Place it in Lower Canada, and the Upper Canadians will be so. In proposing Montreal, therefore, I do not mean to promise that such a decision will not produce great dissatisfaction in Upper Canada, for I am inclined to believe that it will, and I have been told that it will lead to a motion for the repeal of the Union."

At the end of July he wrote again on the same subject:

"The Union was effected without the consent of Lower Canada, and with the hesitating but purchased assent of Upper Canada. The Upper Canadians were induced to agree to the measure by the advantage of putting a share of the burden of their debt and expenditure on Lower Canada, by the hope of aid from the mother country for the advancement of public works, and by a persuasion —it is now added, by an assurance, amounting to a promise, afterwards apparently acted upon, that the seat of the Government of the United Province should be fixed in Upper Canada. This persuasion has been strengthened by the continuance of the Government at Kingston for two years; and its removal would cause disappointment and resentment. The French party, it is supposed, would always be ready to promote a repeal of the Union; but I confine myself at present to the circumstances which render a similar feeling probable on the part of Upper Canada."

This was one root of party-strife, natural, indigenous. Another, which at the same time excited uneasy apprehensions in Metcalfe's mind, had been transplanted from the mother country. It seemed that Canada was a clime in which native and exotic faction throve with equal luxuriance—that the latter, indeed, acquired strength by removal to a soil of such vast regenerative power. All the evils of Irish party-strife seemed, indeed, to have crossed the Atlantic only to appear there in an exaggerated shape. Orange Lodges were in active operation, whilst Hibernian

societies brought together the Irish Catholics, and each flaunted their colours and insignia in the public ways. In the summer of 1843 the streets of Kingston were placarded with bills inviting the people to attend two Irish meetings —the one for the promotion of Repeal, the other, at the same spot, for the purpose of obstructing it, "peaceably," as the placard said, "if we can; forcibly, if we must." The Magistracy were in alarm. Metcalfe was asked authoritatively to suppress the Repeal meeting; but he recommended that the power of persuasion should be tried —and it was tried with good effect. The meeting was not held. But still all the combustible elements remained; and they might any day burst out in a blaze.

The state of affairs in the mother country at this time rendered such an outburst in Canada extremely probable. Ireland, from a state of chronic excitement, had been stimulated into a crisis of fever and delirium; and it was believed that the first tidings of any serious collision between the Irish repealers and the British Government would be the signal for such a rising in the colony as it would be impossible to allay. Alarming rumours were afloat in the province. "It is supposed," wrote Metcalfe, in July, to the Colonial Secretary, "that if any collision were to occur in Ireland between the Government and the disaffected, it would be followed by the pouring in of myriads of Roman Catholic Irish into Canada from the United States, assisted by the inimical portion of the American population; and that they would be joined by the great body of Roman Catholic emigrants now settled in this province. So strongly has this alarm prevailed, that a gentleman of information and ability, and a member of the House of Assembly, recently brought to my private secretary a letter received from New York, written by an individual on whose veracity the gentleman relied, stating that French officers were actively engaged in that place in drilling the

Irish, with whom it abounds, with a view to the invasion of Canada immediately on the occurrence of any outbreak in Ireland." "I cannot say," added Metcalfe, "that I give credit to this intelligence."* But such reports kept the colony in a continual state of unrest, and fomented the strife between the Irish factions in the province.

And so with war between the Upper and Lower Canadians—between the French and English settlers—between the Catholic and Protestant Irish—between the Radical and Conservative English—and between himself and his Council—Metcalfe sometimes despaired of his ability to calm the sea of political trouble which everywhere was foaming around him.

In the state of mind which these anxieties engendered, he was doubtless glad to leave Kingston for a time on a tour of inspection; and to profit by the bracing, invigorating effects of continual change of scene. His reception throughout the province was cordial and complimentary. Everywhere deputations bearing loyal addresses came out to meet the new Governor-General, and to do him honour. But he felt that all these manifestations of apparent enthusiasm were little more than an outside show of loyalty and respect. A brief letter to his sister, written from Quebec, crowds into a few pregnant sentences the history both of his public and private life—of his doings and his feelings at this time:

SIR CHARLES METCALFE TO MRS. SMYTHE.

"*Quebec, August* 27, 1843.

"MY DEAREST GEORGIANA,—I am making a hurried tour through my dominions before the meeting of Parliament, which I have summoned for the 28th of next month. If grand receptions, loyal addresses, banners displayed, and triumphal arches could afford comfort and assurance, I should have them; but I cannot

* *Sir Charles Metcalfe to Lord Stanley, July* 8, 1843.

say that they do; for I fear that the whole concern is rotten at the core. Health as usual. Face no better. The ladies and children remain at Kingston. My love to Mr. S., and Emy. Yours in haste, but ever,

"Most affectionately,

"C. T. METCALFE."

The addresses of which Metcalfe here speaks came as a matter of course. Colonial communities are essentially address-presenting people. Almost from the first day of the Governor-General's arrival in the colony he had been deluged with these addresses. They were, for the most part, notes of welcome, expressive of loyalty to the Crown and confidence in its representative. And now that he was journeying through the province, there was fresh occasion in every town or village which he visited for similar congratulatory manifestations. They came in all forms and fashions, and were written in all styles—some on small sheets of thin letter-paper, others on vast expanses of parchment; some brief in their expressions of loyalty, some diffuse, some grandiloquent; some branching into extraneous topics, some cautionary, some didactic; some almost objurgatory, others almost entirely self-laudatory;*

* Of this class of addresses the following, from the inhabitants of the town of Niagara, is an interesting illustration: "There are recollections connected with the district, now honoured by your presence, to which it will evince no unpardonable pride if on the present occasion, we briefly call your Excellency's attention. It was here that the British standard, emblematic of intelligence, civilisation, and above all, of the Christian faith, first floated over the then vast wilderness of Western Canada. It was here where the first Government of Upper Canada was organised—where its first Parliament deliberated. It was here that during the last war a ruthless invader applied the torch of desolation, and by wantonly burning down every habitation in Niagara (then Newark) provoked a spirit which soon carried retribution into the enemy's land. It was here that the victories of Stoney Creek, Lundy's-lane, and Queenston Heights, attested the unswerving loyalty and dauntless bravery of those upon whom, on these trying occasions,

and a few steeped in that poison of party which, go where he would, Metcalfe found it impossible wholly to escape.

In many of these addresses the inhabitants of the places through which Metcalfe passed approached him with petitions to aid them in their industrial undertakings. There were rising towns or flourishing villages, on spots which a few years before had been howling wildernesses. The visible signs of progress which repeatedly met him as he went, and the vast capability of still greater development through the agency of reproductive works, filled Metcalfe with sorrow at the thought that the prosperity of so noble a country, long retarded by misgovernment, should now again be obstructed by the curse of an unquenchable party spirit. There was something childlike in the confidence with which some of the people approached him, and beautiful in their expressions of gratitude for the paternal kindness of his predecessor. Except in places where Toryism in its worst form was rampant, strong indications of the attachment with which Sir Charles Bagot

devolved the privilege of sustaining British fame. It was here, too, that one of your predecessors gloriously fell whilst in the courageous discharge of his duty; and almost within view rises a monument to preserve his memory, and to stimulate those who behold it to heroism like his, erected by a people who venerate his name, and who never look on that monument, shattered as it now is by the sacrilegious hands of nameless ruffians, without anticipating that your Excellency will, as soon as opportunity offers, carry into effect the expressed intention of your Excellency's immediate predecessor, to take such steps as will restore Brock's monument to a condition worthy the character of the province and of the hero whose achievements it is intended to perpetuate. 'To the Niagara district, prominent in historical recollections, sublime in the natural scenery it presents, distinguished by the oftentimes proved loyalty of its inhabitants, we heartily bid your Excellency welcome; and I trust that a respite from the toils and cares of official life will be as satisfactory to you as the opportunity of thus addressing your Excellency is gratifying to us." Guernsey, the birth-place of Sir Isaac Brock, may well be proud of her hero.

had been regarded, and of sorrow for his death, met the new Governor-General as he advanced. "Like fond children recently deprived of one good parent," said the framers of one of these addresses, "we anxiously hope that you will long be blessed with health to enable you to perfect, under Providence, your great wish of seeing Canada as one family—united, happy, and prosperous. Such a state, we fondly hope, under your auspices, is not far distant; and to assist in its production we pledge our loyalty, industry, and charity one towards another." In a somewhat similar strain of charity and good-will the Irish inhabitants of Brantford approached him. "We anxiously wish," they said, "to live in peace and good-will with our fellow-men of every creed and clime, and will hail with delight reciprocal feelings; for we are perfectly aware that nothing conduces more to the happiness or prosperity of a town or people than peace and good order."

Addresses conceived in this spirit it was simply a pleasure to receive—but others came to him bitterly complaining that the state of public feeling in the country was paralysing the industry of the people; tainting the fount of justice, and impeding the spread of education. Everywhere the effects of strong party spirit were visible.* For example, the inhabitants of the township of Pelham, in the Niagara district, introduced into their address of welcome a passage expressing "unfeigned sorrow" that efforts had been made to weaken his Excellency's opinion of Messrs. Baldwin and Lafontaine and the other members of his Cabinet; and hoping that his confidence in them would not be diminished by any representations made by the enemies of responsible government."

The constitutionalists of Orillia, on the other hand, gave utterance in an address to their desire to see the expulsion

* Sometimes two addresses would come to him from the same place—each claiming to be *the* address of the people.

from the Council of the Baldwin-and-Lafontaine section of it. "We have not the slightest wish," they said, "to dictate to your Excellency, but conscientiously believing that it would tend to the real good, happiness, and prosperity of the country, we in all humility venture to recommend the dismissal of the following members from your Councils:—the Honourable Messrs. Harrison, Lafontaine, Baldwin, Hincks, and Small."

Whatever Metcalfe may have thought of the advantages of the measure recommended in this concluding passage, he had but one answer to return to such an address. He answered the subscribers as he answered their opponents—reproving them for such a display of bitter feeling, and exhorting them to peace and charity as the surest means of advancing the prosperity of the country.

It must have been a relief, indeed, to Sir Charles Metcalfe to turn aside from the contemplation of the party-heats and animosities engendered in the minds of the European settlers in this noble North-American province, to the trusting simplicity and childlike affection with which the remnant of the indigenous people crept to the feet of the new Governor. If, when he received and replied to these simple and touching appeals, Metcalfe wished that he were the patriarchal head of a tribe in some uncorrupted country, where the only party-strife was between Ignorance and Knowledge—between heathen superstition on the one side, and the glad tidings of salvation on the other, and the only responsible government known, the responsibility of a Christian ruler to the great teacher of the Universe—there are few who will not sympathise with the feeling.

But there was another kind of responsible government still pressing him sorely—still dogging his heels wherever he went. The subject, in such a party-ridden country, could not be kept out of the addresses presented to him

during his tour. His answer was always, that he was the friend and upholder of Responsible Government—but that there had been, in some quarters, a misconstruction of the words. "You entirely misapprehend me," he said, in reply to an address from the Talbot district,* "in supposing that I am unwilling to avail myself of the information and assistance of the Executive Council. On the contrary, I am always desirous of obtaining them, and no mistake can be greater than to imagine that I am reluctant to seek and receive their advice. I found responsible government practically acknowledged in this colony, and I have endeavoured to carry it out for the public good. It may, however, be pushed to an extreme which would render it impracticable; and that is the case when it is attempted to render the Governor merely a tool in the hands of a Council, demanding that the prerogative of the Crown should be surrendered to them for party purposes."

This great question of the meaning of Responsible Government was now fast approaching a practical solution. The Assembly had been summoned to meet on the 28th of September; and Metcalfe was now hurrying down to Kingston. He could not regard with much complacency the threatening prospects before him. At one time, before the commencement of his tour, he had entertained some hope that, inasmuch as all the members of the Ministry were not disposed to advance the same pretensions, a collision might be avoided.† But this hope

* The Talbot-district was a very hotbed of faction. On Metcalfe's arrival he had received two addresses from it, one calling upon him to support the liberal institutions of the country; and the other denouncing responsible government as a dangerous innovation that must lead to the disruption of the colony from the mother country.

† On the 25th of June he wrote, in a private letter to Lord Stanley:—"I have got on smoothly with the Council hitherto,

did not long sustain him. He knew that the more violent section of the Council was at the same time the more powerful; and that whilst there was no preponderating element on the other side to keep down the extravagances of the Baldwin and Lafontaine party, a rupture might any day occur.

When he thought, too, of the meeting of Parliament, and the state of parties in the Assembly, he saw, too, that there was much to render his position very painful and embarrassing. In the summer he had written to Lord Stanley on the subject, pointing out the difficulties which beset him on every side, owing to the necessity of his adopting a course which was calculated to give satisfaction neither to those of whose opinions he approved, nor to those with whom he could not sympathise:

"My chief annoyance," he wrote, "at present proceeds from the discontent of what may fairly be called the British party in distinction from the others. It is the only party in the colony with which I can sympathize. I have no sympathy with the anti-British rancour of the French party, or the selfish indifference

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with cautions on my part, but without any sacrifice of what appears to be under present circumstances the proper authority of the Governor. The business of the Government is carried on by myself in communication with the secretaries; no orders are issued without my personal direction or sanction; and only those matters are referred to the Council which the law or established practice require to be so dealt with, or on which I really wish to have the benefit of their local knowledge and advice. No pretensions have been advanced on their part to render necessary a statement of opposite principles; and one might almost suppose that the unreasonable assumptions before asserted by some of them had been abandoned. I am not, however, sure of this; and although I see no reason now to apprehend an immediate rupture, I am sensible that it may happen any day. If all were of the same mind with three or four, it would be more certain. But there are moderate men among them, and they are not all united in the same unwarrantable expectations."

towards our country of the Republican party. Yet these are the parties with which I have to co-operate; and because I do not cast them off, the other party will not see that I cannot, and construe all my acts as if they were the result of adhesion to anti-British policy. "Unfortunately, the measures which I have recommended, if adopted, will add to this impression, although not deservedly; and I shall be the object of distrust and abuse to the only party with which I sympathize; for I can hardly expect that an opportunity will occur or which I can avail myself to show my feelings towards them. In speaking of their discontent, I allude to the indications of it exhibited by the press on the other side. All the gentlemen of the party with whom I have conversed on the subject admit the difficulties of my position, and the impossibility, with any advantage, of breaking with the party supported by the majority, even if I were so disposed. My own desire would be to rid myself of connections with any parties exclusively, and to adopt whatever measures may be best, with equal justice to all, with councillors selected from all parties; but this at present seems impracticable, for party spirit runs too high to admit of such a union.

"This party spirit leads to party conclusions, and renders it difficult, if not impossible, to conciliate all parties. If I have already failed with the one in whose loyal feelings I sympathize, it is not likely that I shall be successful with those for whose anti-British feelings, whether rancorously hostile or coldly indifferent, I have an innate antipathy. The only system likely to be successful that rulers can adopt in dealing with such feelings in subjects is, I believe, to treat them as if such feelings did not exist; and although this may cause the really loyal to abuse me, I shall never allow myself to be angered against the latter, for I shall know that they will do so in ignorance of my feelings towards them, and from not weighing with due consideration the duties which I have to perform. I wish that I could anticipate the day when all would be reconciled, and United Canada be really united in internal harmony and attachment to the British Crown. Such a consummation is, I fear, remote and uncertain; but I believe, nevertheless, that a large portion of her Majesty's subjects in this colony are as loyal and as devoted as in any part of her dominions."

This, in due course, came to be demonstrated. But, in the meanwhile, a great struggle was before him. At

the end of September, Sir Charles Metcalfe met the Provincial Parliament. His opening address was quiet and conciliatory. He spoke of the birth of a princess; of the death of Sir Charles Bagot;* of the benefits conferred on the colony by the increased facilities afforded for the importation of Canadian wheat into the mother country; of the tour which he had recently made; of the signs of prosperity he had witnessed; of the public works in progress; of the loyalty which had been evinced; of the advantages to be derived by the people from improved lines of communication;† of the state of the gaols, and the necessity of a general improvement in prison discipline; of the educational affairs of the colony; of the state of the finances; of the guaranteed loan; of the Customs laws and other matters of revenue: "The welfare of Canada," he said, in conclusion, "depends on the results of your delibe-

* Metcalfe seems always to have taken extreme pleasure in speaking with commendation of his predecessors—an example which his successors did not always follow. The following passage in which he refers to the death of Sir Charles Bagot is very characteristic:—"In the same interval an afflicting event has occurred in Canada, by the demise of your late Governor, my immediate predecessor, whose heart was devoted to the public; therefore universal regret has done honour to his memory throughout the province, and I cannot abstain from noticing that his desolate widow and family, and his mortal remains, in passing through the neighbouring territories of the United States to their place of embarkation at New York, were received with marked and affecting tokens of friendly respect, which indicated both the esteem in which he was held in a country in which he had been personally well known, and also a generous sympathy worthy of the great nation by which it was evinced."

† He was always very eager to improve and to extend the roads of the province. Contrast this with his minutes regarding the extension of roads in India. He had been twice in England since he wrote the latter, before which time he had been thirty years in India without once bringing himself into contact with the growing civilization of the West.

rations on the numerous and important questions which will come before you; and it will, I trust, be the sole object of your labours. It is the anxious desire of her Majesty's Government, and will be the constant aim of my endeavours. I humbly hope that the blessing of Almighty God will crown our united efforts with success." There was not the same heart in this speech that there was in his first address to the Legislature of Jamaica. The difference is painfully apparent. Metcalfe seemed to look with feelings almost of despair at the difficult work which lay before him.

To those who watched narrowly the progress of events and took note of casual symptoms as they arose, it soon became apparent that the inevitable collision between the Governor-General and his Council was now very close at hand. The business of the Session proceeded hopefully, for, although there were measures regarding which Sir Charles Metcalfe differed from his Council, it was not anticipated that any great inconvenience would result from this difference of opinion. It was more probable that the collision would be precipitated by some petty personal matter, elevated into importance only by the principle which it was supposed to involve. All through the month of October and the early part of November—during which some important local acts were passed, including one for the removal of the seat of Government to Montreal—these threatening appearances continued to increase. The principal members of the Executive Council utterly misunderstood the character of Sir Charles Metcalfe, and believed that they would gain an easy victory. Their official bearing towards him was insolent and contemptuous. In the House of Assembly, on more than one occasion, they exhibited their practical disregard of his position as the representative of the Crown, by showing that they were inclined to keep him in ignorance of their Ministerial proceedings. The only member of the Council in whom

he had any real confidence they publicly repudiated.* Their conduct, as Metcalfe painfully felt, was rather that of antagonists than of colleagues. He confessed that he had no confidence in them. Some, who saw what was passing out of doors, believed that the leading members of the Administration were eager to force on a rupture, not so much on account of anything that was likely to be the pretext for it, as because a state of things had arisen in the

* Mr. Daly. See Mr. Gibbon Wakefield's account of this transaction. His authority is that of an actor in the scene described.

"I was in the House of Assembly," says Mr. Wakefield, "when a regular supporter of the Government, but not holding any office, made a speech suggesting the impeachment of an Executive Councillor, Mr. Daly, the Secretary of the Province, for having advised Lord Sydenham to make, in favour of the said Mr. Daly, an unlawful appropriation of the colonial revenue. So little had such an attack been expected, that the person accused was not present, and the members generally were in total ignorance of the subject. When the accuser sat down it was, of course, supposed that the Ministers present would defend their absent colleague. Instead of this, two members of the Executive Council, Mr. Hinckes, Inspector-General of Accounts, and Mr. Alwyn, Solicitor-General for Lower Canada, one of them being a dependent of Mr. Baldwin, and the other of Mr. Lafontaine, made speeches admitting the guilt of their colleague, but deprecating inquiry into a matter which was already so plain. Mr. Lafontaine and Mr. Baldwin were present, but said nothing. Shocked at their treachery to Mr. Daly, I upbraided them with it, and insisted on a full inquiry into the subject. The whole House, with the exception of the Treasury Bench, where disappointment and confusion were manifest, took my view; a select committee was appointed by acclamation, the greatest number of votes being given for me in choosing its members; and this Committee in a few hours reported (the accuser being chairman and drawing the report) that not a shadow of ground had ever existed for any charge against Mr. Daly. During the inquiry by the committee Mr Daly necessarily made me acquainted with all the circumstances of the case; and I then learned that a very serious difference with respect to it had for some time existed between the Governor-General and all his councillors except Mr. Daly."

Council and in the Assembly, which might cause extreme embarrassment to the former by withdrawing from them a considerable number of their supporters in the latter, and eventually cause their defeat.

Metcalfe was no tactician. If he had been, seeing that a collision was inevitable, he would have taken care to break with his Council upon some point that would have secured for him the sympathies of an influential portion of the colonial community. As it was, he suffered things to take their course; and thought only of resisting the encroachments which he regarded as encroachments on the prerogative of the Crown. At the end of November the crisis came. The question which precipitated it at last was a question of patronage. Metcalfe had appointed to his personal Staff a French-Canadian officer who was distasteful to Mr. Lafontaine. The appointment was intended to conciliate the French-Canadian community, but it offended their chief. The leaders of both parties in the Council then waited on the Governor-General, intent on advancing the pretensions of the Executive. They demanded that the Governor-General should make no appointment without the sanction of his Ministers. During two long sittings, on the 24th and 25th of November, Baldwin and Lafontaine pressed their demands with energy and resolution; but Metcalfe, in his own placid way, was equally energetic and resolute. His natural serenity was undisturbed by the irritating hostility of his opponents. The crisis was one of which it was impossible to foresee the results. It might end in a disastrous and inglorious termination of his long career of public service, and at no very remote period in the severance of the colony from the mother country.* But Metcalfe, during those two days of

* Some time before he had written, in anticipation of a rupture, to an old friend and member of his family in India (Colonel Stokes), saying: "By the strange state of things produced by my prede-

trial, was as calm and unruffled as ever. In the domestic circle no change was apparent in his manner. He played with Higginson's children just as joyously as though there had been nothing to cloud his happiness or to distract his mind.

On the 26th of November, all the members of Council, with the exception of Mr. Daly, finding that they could not shake the firmness of the Governor-General, resigned their offices, and prepared to justify their conduct to Parliament and the colony at large. I will not doubt the sincerity, or question the public virtue of Baldwin and Lafontaine. Doubtless, they believed that they also were fighting in defence of constitutional government, and that the interests of the province demanded that they should not abate a jot. They clung to their own notions of responsible government; and took their stand upon certain resolutions,

cessors, success is scarcely possible, and you may expect every day to hear that I am involved in difficulties and strife. If I followed my own inclination, I should ship myself immediately on my return to England; but the same sense of duty which brought me will detain me, until decided failure may cure her Majesty's Government of the expectation that I can manage matters satisfactorily. It would require a long story to explain the state of things which makes me despair of doing good; the short of it is, that I am expected by the most powerful party in the colony to govern according to their views, and that in refusing to do so, I shall become involved in a contest with the majority in the Provincial Parliament, which will be tantamount to a failure. The idea of governing according to the interested views of a party, is odious to me; I wish to govern with equal treatment and justice to all parties; but the prospect of doing so without contest with the dominant party, and that anti-British, is hopeless. The contest, once commenced, will either be endless, or will end in submission on the part of the Government, or separation of the colony from the mother country; and the least evil to be expected for me personally will be, the retirement, with discredit, of the Governor, who will be blamed for a state of things in reality rendered almost unavoidable by the proceedings of his predecessors."

passed by the House of Assembly in 1841, containing an authoritative rendering of the phrase.* But they were intoxicated with draughts of unaccustomed power, and they did not see that they were condemned, even by the doctrines which they most loudly vaunted.

In his turn, Metcalfe, complaining that the ex-councillors had withheld from the Assembly the real circumstances of the rupture, put forth an explanatory statement. I give the bulk of it as I find it in his own original draft: †

"On Friday Mr. Lafontaine and Mr. Baldwin came to the Government House, and after some irrelevant matters of business and preliminary remarks as to the course of their proceedings, demanded of the Governor-General that he should agree to make no appointment, and no offer of an appointment, without previously taking the advice of the Council; that the lists of candidates should in every instance be laid before the Council; that they should recommend any others at discretion; and that the Governor-General in deciding, after taking their advice, should not make any ap-

* They were substantially these:—"That the head of the Executive Government of the province, being within the limits of his Government the representative of the Sovereign, is responsible to the Imperial authority alone; but, that, nevertheless, the management of our local affairs can only be conducted by him, by and with the assistance, counsel, and information of subordinate officers in the province;" and "that in order to preserve between the different branches of the Provincial Parliament that harmony which is essential to the peace, welfare, and good government of the province, the chief advisers of the representative of the Sovereign, constituting a Provincial Administration under him, ought to be men possessed of the confidence of the representatives of the people, thus affording a guarantee that the well-understood wishes and interests of the people, which our gracious Sovereign has declared shall be the rule of the Provincial Government, will, on all occasions, be faithfully represented and advocated."

† The draft is full of erasures, showing the care which Metcalfe took to omit everything of an offensive or personal nature, which in his first eagerness to tell the plain truth he had committed to paper.

pointment prejudicial to their influence; in other words, that the patronage of the Crown should be surrendered to the Council for the purchase of Parliamentary support; for if the demand did not mean that, it meant nothing, as it cannot be imagined that the mere form of taking advice without regarding it was the process contemplated.

"The Governor-General replied, that he could not make any such stipulation, and could not degrade the character of his office, nor violate his duty, by such a surrender of the prerogative of the Crown.

"He appealed to the number of appointments made by him on the recommendation of the Council, or the members of it in their departmental capacity, and to instances in which he had abstained from conferring appointments on their opponents, as furnishing proofs of the great consideration which he had evinced towards the Council in the distribution of the patronage of the Crown.

"He at the same time objected, as he always had done, to the exclusive distribution of patronage with party views, and maintained the principle that office ought, in every instance, to be given to the man best qualified to render efficient service to the State; and where there was no such pre-eminence he asserted his right to exercise his discretion.

"He understood from Messrs. Lafontaine and Baldwin that their continuance in office depended on his final decision with regard to their demand, and it was agreed that at the Council to be assembled the next day, that subject should be fully discussed.

"He accordingly met the Council on Saturday, convinced that they would resign, as he could not recede from the resolution which he had formed; and the same subject became the principal topic of discussion. Three or more distinct propositions were made to him over and over again, sometimes in different terms, but always aiming at the same purpose, which in his opinion, if accomplished, would have been a virtual surrender into the hands of the Council of the prerogative of the Crown; and on his uniformly replying to these propositions in the negative, his refusal was each time followed by 'then we must resign,' or words to that purport, from one or more of the Council.

"After the discussion of this question at so much length, being as he has hitherto conceived the one on which the resignation of the Council rested, he is astonished at finding that their resignation is now ascribed to an alleged difference of opinion on the theory of responsible government.

"In the course of the conversations which both on Friday and Saturday followed the explicit demand made by the Council regarding the patronage of the Crown, that demand being based on the construction put by some of the gentlemen on the meaning of responsible government, different opinions were elicited on the abstract theory of that still undefined question as applicable to a colony—a subject on which considerable difference of opinion is known everywhere to prevail; but the Governor-General, during those conversations, protested; and still protests, against its being asserted or supposed that he is practically adverse to the working of the system of responsible government which has been here established, which he has hitherto pursued without deviation, and to which it is fully his intention to adhere.

"The Governor-General subscribes entirely to the resolution of the Legislative Assembly of the 3rd of September, 1841, and considers any other system of government but that which recognises responsibility to the people and the Representative Assembly as impracticable in this province. No man is more satisfied that all government exists solely for the benefit of the people; and he appeals confidently to his uniform conduct here and elsewhere in support of this assertion."

To an imputation, brought against him by the Council, that he had opposed and obstructed the legislation of the two Houses, in the matter of a bill for the suppression of Secret Societies, Metcalfe replied:—

"Allusion is made to the Governor-General's having determined to reserve for the consideration of her Majesty's Government one of the bills passed by the two Legislative Houses, that is, the Secret Societies Bill. If there is any part of the functions of the Governor in which he is more than in any other bound to exercise an independent judgment, it must be with regard to giving the Royal assent to Acts of Parliament. With regard to this duty he has special instructions from her Majesty to reserve every Act of an unusual or extraordinary character. Undoubtedly, the Secret Societies Bill answers to that description, being unexampled in British legislation. The gentlemen of the late Council heard his sentiments on it expressed to them. He also told them that it was an arbitrary and unwise measure, and not even calculated to effect the object that it had in view. He had given his consent to its being introduced into Parliament, because he

had promised, soon after his assumption of the Government, that he would sanction legislation on the subject, as a substitute for executive measures which he refused to adopt. The gentlemen of the late Council cannot fail to remember with what pertinacity those measures were pressed on him, and can hardly be unaware of what would have followed at that time, if, in addition to rejecting the proscriptive measures urged on him, he had also refused to permit any legislation on the subject.

"Permission to introduce a bill can never be justly assumed as fettering the Governor's judgment with regard to the Royal assent, for the discussion in Parliament during the passage of the bill through the Legislature may materially influence his decision in this case. The bill was strongly opposed and reprobated in the Assembly, but when it went to the Legislative Council, many of the members had seceded, and it did not come up from that House with the advantage of having been passed in a full meeting. Taking those circumstances into consideration, together with the precise instructions of her Majesty, and the uncertainty of her Majesty's allowing such a bill to go into operation, the Governor-General considered it to be his duty to reserve it for her Majesty's consideration, as it was much better that it should not go into operation until confirmed by her Majesty's Government, than that it should be disallowed after its operation had commenced."

It need not be said that the Council were supported by a majority in the Representative Assembly. Metcalfe had always been very unwilling to stop the business of the session, and but for this would, perhaps, have brought on a crisis before. This was now altogether inevitable. Parliament might be prorogued; but he could not strike his colours. "You will perceive by the papers," he wrote to an old schoolfellow and brother collegian, with whom he had often exchanged playfully a Greek or Latin quotation, "that I am engaged in a contest with the 'civium ardor prava jubentium.' I am acting cautiously, in the hope of bringing matters right in a quiet way. I cannot with certainty anticipate the result, but do not mean to yield whatever it may be. To the question at issue, which is, whether the Governor is to be in some degree what his

title imports, or a mere tool in the hands of the party that can obtain a majority in the representative body, I am, I conceive, 'vir justus,' and I certainly mean to be 'tenax propositi,' and hope 'Si fractus illabatur orbis, impavidum ferient ruinæ.'"*

These proceedings speedily threw the whole colony into a fever of excitement. Wherever men congregated, from the banks of the Huron to the mouth of the St. Lawrence, they assembled and took counsel with each other, and discussed the conflicting claims of the Governor-General and his councillors. Nor were they contented with discussion. It was necessary that they should give utterance to their feelings and opinions through the old channel of addresses to his Excellency the Governor-General. So public meetings were held, and addresses were drawn up; and for a third time since his arrival in the colony, a shower of these documents descended upon Metcalfe from all parts

* He was wont, writing to his Indian friends, to compare his position to that of an Indian Governor, who might have to rule through the agency of a Mahomedan Ministry and a Mahomedan Parliament. I find the same form of expression used in more than one letter, but I am not sure of the correctness of the analogy. To Colonel Stokes he wrote: "Fancy such a state of things in India, with a Mahomedan Assembly, and you will have some notion of my position. On a distinct demand from the Council for stipulations which would have reduced me to a nonentity, I refused. They instantly resigned, and were supported by the House of Assembly. Since then I have not even been able to form a Council likely to carry a majority, such is the dread of the power of the party who thought by their resignation to drive me to receive them back and to submit to their demands. I have now to strive to obtain a majority in the present Parliament. If I fail in that, I must dissolve, and try a new one. I do not know that I shall have a better chance in that; and if I fail then still I cannot submit, for that would be to surrender the Queen's Government into the hands of rebels, and to become myself their ignominious tool. I know not what the end will be. The only thing certain is that I cannot yield."

of the province. And it was a far heavier one than either that had gone before. Not only were the addresses which now poured in from all quarters more numerous, but they were also far more significant. They were not mere complimentary effusions. They were genuine outspoken expressions of opinion. Metcalfe, indeed, was now on his trial. He was arraigned before the colonists at large. Whatever may have been the condition to which Prerogative was to be reduced, there is no doubt that Privilege then was flourishing to its heart's content. Every man conceived that he was privileged to say what he liked; and never, perhaps, under any form of government, responsible or irresponsible, has there been a more unrestrained exhibition of the feelings and opinions of individual men.

What the opinions of the colony at large may have been, it is not easy to determine. It appears to me, that they who understood the real nature of the question at issue sided with the Governor-General, and that they who did not, supported the councillors. The addresses which Metcalfe received were of different complexions. The greater number, as may be supposed, were intended to encourage and to support him; but as his friends at such a time were more likely to be demonstrative than his enemies, and silence may have been intended to imply condemnation, this cannot be accepted as a proof of the general state of feeling in the colony. But there were several which, although couched in loyal and respectful language, were addressed to the consideration of the great question at issue, and decided it against the Governor-General. To all such demonstrations Metcalfe replied in a calm and dignified tone. He did not wrap himself up in a cloak of official reserve, or carry himself superbly as the representative of the Crown; but was explanatory and argumentative in his replies. In a plain, straightforward

manner he exposed the errors into which some members of the community had been betrayed by the ex-councillors or their partisans; entered into a statement of his own views; and declared the principles of action by which he would thenceforth be guided as the chief ruler of the province. If any proof had been required of the fact that Metcalfe was no despot, that he fully recognised the rights of the people, and believed himself to be responsible to them for the just administration of their affairs, it would have been found in the attention which he bestowed on all these utterances of public opinion, and the earnestness which spoke out of his replies.* To his reply to one particular address subsequent reference was frequently made, as to the one in which the Governor-General most fully declared his sentiments. The answer to the address of the Gore Councillors—as it is known in colonial history—was pre-eminently Metcalfe's manifesto. It was said of it by his supporters, that it was worthy of being written in letters of gold.†

* It may be mentioned that, although at this time addresses were pouring in by scores, the answers returned to every one of them were originally written by himself, and that no two are alike. The skill with which he varied the forms of expression, where it was impossible to embody new ideas, is worthy of being recorded, as an indication of considerable literary ability; but it is still more noteworthy as an indication of the earnest, serious feeling with which he received these expressions of public opinion, and estimated their importance, not as mere matters of course, to be answered by a Secretary's formula, but thoughtfully and impressively by himself.

† The address was signed by sixteen members of the Municipal Council of the Gore district. It will be found, with Metcalfe's reply, in the Appendix. Another address, conceived in a very different spirit, was forwarded from the "freeholders and inhabitants" of the same district. "We beg to assure your Excellency," they said, "that the definition of the doctrine of responsible government, expressed in your message to the House of Assembly, on Wednesday, the 29th of November last, has our

It would have been well if the expression of opinion in the colony had been limited to the temperate language of these provincial addresses—if the excitement which attended the resignation of the councillors had been adequately represented by these documents. But very different was the language employed by some of the ex-councillors and their more zealous partisans, with reference to the character and conduct of the Governor-General. At public meetings, in after-dinner speeches, in vehement party-pamphlets, these gentlemen employed in turn the weapons of ridicule and vituperation with equal virulence and with equal success. With both they failed miserably. They called Sir Charles Metcalfe hard names, and they spoke of him with assumed contempt. Now reviling, now sneering at him, they applied to the representative of the Crown epithets in every respect contradictory, except the abuse they were intended to convey. He was at one time "Charles the Simple," and "Old Squaretoes;" at another,

decided approbation." After stating at some length their opinions of the constitutional government best suited to the colony, they concluded by saying: "In the support of these principles and opinions the loyal men of Gore will always be found, as they aways have been in more perilous times.—'Ready—aye, ready;' they will rally round the royal standard of the glorious empire of which they are proud to form an integral part; they will follow that standard in your Excellency's hand wherever you will lead them, and then may God defend the right, and save the Queen." To this outburst of loyalty Metcalfe replied: "If more active exertions were needed, your gallant and heroic conduct in times of peril would prove to me that I might confidently depend on your undaunted courage and devoted spirit for every effort that the energy of man is capable of producing; but God forbid that I should live to see the peace and harmony of this province disturbed by the hateful tumults of war and discord. I hope and trust that the only contest we ever have to sustain together will be the pacific one in which we are now engaged, in defence of constitutional government and British connection."

a designing and unscrupulous despot. The man who had been selected in turn by the two great party-leaders of the British Empire to superintend in critical conjunctures the affairs of the two most important of our Crown colonies, was now to be jeered at as a dupe; and he whom whithersoever he went the blessings of a grateful people had ever followed, was now to be branded as a tyrant. If you had believed all that was said by these hot-headed North Americans, you could not have escaped from the conviction that Sir Charles Metcalfe, utterly regardless of the rights and happiness of the people, was trampling down the liberties of the colony with a relentless heel. It was said at a public meeting, by an excited follower of the Lafontaine-and-Baldwin party, that the Governor-General should be driven back "into retirement in dear old England, where tyrants have no power," and "where he would writhe under the reproach and remorse that is ever inflicted by a secret monitor on all those who disregard or wantonly sport with the happiness of their fellow-creatures, or trample on the rights and liberties of those they are unfortunately doomed to govern." It is easy to imagine how the benign smile, which seldom left the corner of Charles Metcalfe's mouth, must have spread itself over his poor face on seeing a portrait of himself so deliciously untrue.

But all the vehemence of the ex-councillors and their partisans could not really disturb the peace of the colony. There was a fund of loyalty and good sense in all parts of the province not easily to be exhausted. "In the meanwhile," wrote Metcalfe at the end of February, "the affairs of the Government proceed as regularly and efficaciously as if the Council were complete. The country is tranquil. Business is active. The people are prospering, and there is little political agitation, although some of the members and partisans of the late Council endeavour to excite it."

The Baldwin-and-Lafontaine Council had resigned at

the end of November; and now at the end of February their places were not filled. Seldom has the head of a Government found himself in a more embarrassing position than that into which Metcalfe was thrown by the resignation of his Ministers. In England, when the Ministry resign, there is commonly another set of statesmen ready and eager to take their places—an expectant Ministry, with the disposition of offices pre-arranged, waiting only to be called. But there was no such succedaneum at hand to relieve Sir Charles Metcalfe from his difficulties. One cabinet had been broken in pieces, and it seemed almost impossible to construct another out of the materials at his disposal. The state of parties furnished one great obstacle to success; the limited *personnel* of colonial statesmanship another. It was hard to say whether it were more difficult to arrange parties, or to find men.

"On the resignation of my dictatorial cabinet," wrote Metcalfe to the Colonial Secretary, "the Conservative party came forward manfully and generously to my support; and if I could have thrown myself entirely into their arms, that support would have been complete and enthusiastic." But this course he could not bring himself to pursue. He was unwilling to identify himself so unmistakeably with any party; and he knew, moreover, that the constitutional party was not in itself sufficiently strong to preserve him from discomfiture and defeat. It was his desire to form a new Ministry, consisting of the representatives of all parties; and to this end he at once placed himself in communication with some of the leading members of the three great political divisions—the French-Canadians, the Reformers, and the Conservatives. But he soon found that the idea of this fusion of parties was a mere delusion. The French-Canadians were inclined to follow their leader to a man; and the Reformers and Conservatives could not

be brought to coalesce. Eager, therefore, as Metcalfe was at once to form a new Council, the difficulties which met him at the outset compelled him to pause. Moreover, it seemed useless to endeavour to form a new Council during the short remaining period of the Session, as in the existing state of excitement a majority of the Assembly were sure to range themselves on the side of the ex-councillors.

What then was to be done? Parliament was prorogued. The Governor-General was without a Council. But he was not without advisers. In the embarrassments which had beset him, he had sought the advice of two able and respectable men, with considerable weight in the colony—Mr. Viger and Mr. Draper. Mr. Viger was a French-Canadian, of property, influence, and reputation. He had suffered much during the recent troubles for the support which he had given to his countrymen. The insurrection of 1838 brought upon him, justly or unjustly, the loss of his personal liberty. He had been thrown into prison, as a fomentor of rebellion, on the evidence of some proof-sheets of a seditious character, corrected by himself, which had been found in his house. His incarceration had lasted for eighteen months, and he had come out from confinement a martyr, but not a fanatic. The sufferings which he had endured in their cause fixed him securely in the hearts of the French-Canadian people, and embittered them against the Imperial Government. But he was neither a violent nor a selfish man. He would have shrunk from turning to any bad uses the influence which he had thus created. Injustice seems to have pursued him; but it did not harden his heart. Metcalfe, indeed, found him proscribed. Viger had been recommended for a seat in the Legislative Council, but the Colonial Office had rejected him; and the Governor-General, when he now announced that he had called him to his Council, was compelled to preface the announcement with an apology.

Of his ability and energy there was no doubt. He had been reported, some time before, as "too old" for official employment; but his seventy years sat lightly upon him, and Metcalfe soon found that he had the vigour and assiduity with more than the steadfastness of younger men. In the juncture which had now arisen, his conduct was eminently disinterested. He knew that by coming forward at such a time to the aid of the Governor-General, he would sacrifice all his influence with his countrymen, and be looked upon as a renegade. But he was prepared to make the sacrifice; and he made it, not finding that he over-estimated its extent. "Mr. Viger," said Sir Charles Metcalfe, "has acted a noble part. I entertain unqualified admiration of his character and conduct."

Mr. Draper was a lawyer, long settled in Toronto, with a thriving business and a well-earned reputation. He had been a member of Lord Sydenham's Council, and had pledged himself to the support of Responsible Government—but he was a loyalist to the very core, a strenuous supporter of British connection. His talents for business were of the highest order. He was prompt, assiduous, and methodical. Metcalfe regarded him as a first-rate administrator, and said that his eminent capacity enabled him to take the place of half-a-dozen men. But he returned to statesmanship with reluctance. Like the majority of competent men of business in the colony, he was disinclined, upon private considerations, to become a member of the Government. His personal connections were with Toronto and Kingston; and the seat of Government was to be removed to Montreal. There was nothing to induce him, therefore to attach himself to the Governor-General, but a belief that he could render service to his country. In this belief, he consented to make the sacrifice; and he was sworn in with Mr. Viger and Mr. Daly as a member of the Executive Council.

The latter still held office as Provincial Secretary for

Lower Canada. Viger and Draper recommended that they should be sworn in as members of the Executive Council without having any office of emolument conferred upon them. By this provisional arrangement, they urged, the executive administration of the Government might be carried on for a time without filling up any of the vacant appointments. To this Metcalfe reluctantly assented. There was only a choice of difficulties. The delay in forming a Ministry was, doubtless, an evil; but it would have been of little use to form a Ministry without popular support.

The great object to be attained was the support of some influential members of the French-Canadian party, and hope was entertained that time would favour the accomplishment of this object. Viger confidently expected that his countrymen "would come round to reason and justice." Communications encouraging this belief were received from different parts of Lower Canada. It was often urged that nothing more was needed than the presence of Mr. Viger himself to gather round him a party inclined to support the Government. So the venerable statesman proceeded to Montreal, and for a time these favourable expectations seemed likely to be fulfilled. "His communications," said Metcalfe, "gave encouragement; but it soon became evident that his presence had not produced any decisive effect." There was an election for a seat in the Representative Assembly, vacated by the late incumbent, then coming on at Montreal.* It had been looked forward to for some time as the great political event of the day. Sanguine expectations were entertained by the supporters of the Government that the issue of the contest would be in their favour. But the result belied their anticipations. There was a disgraceful scene of violence and outrage.

* I believe that he had resigned because he could not conscientiously vote for the transfer of the seat of Government to Montreal.

Government were beaten, but by such means as could only render victory shameful. "Brought about as it was," wrote Metcalfe, "by shameful violence and a hired mob of strangers, it ought to have covered the contrivers of the destruction of freedom with disgrace; but it has had the contrary effect of discouraging the friends of her Majesty's Government, and of rendering the junction of the French party more improbable than ever."

Whilst fruitless efforts were thus being made to win over the French-Canadians to represent Lower Canada in the Executive Council, Metcalfe was eager to make his arrangements for the completion of the "Upper Canada portion of the Council." But here another difficulty met him. To Mr. Draper, on whom he relied as his "mainstay in Upper Canada," it appeared expedient rather to wait the issue of the negotiations pending in Lower Canada, and to be guided by the out-turn of events. To this Metcalfe reluctantly consented. But it was soon apparent that no benefit would be derived from further delay. At the end of June, Mr. Draper proceeded to Montreal, and had soon an opportunity of satisfying himself regarding the state of feeling in Lower Canada. The reports which he made after a three weeks' residence in that city were of a most discouraging complexion. He wrote to Sir Charles Metcalfe, that after diligently prosecuting his inquiries, and extending his observations in all possible quarters, he could come to no other conclusion than that the aid of the French-Canadian party was not to be obtained upon any other than the impossible terms of the restoration of Baldwin and Lafontaine. The difficulty, indeed, seemed to thicken. According to Mr. Draper, indeed, it was one from which there was no escape. After the lapse of seven months, during which the country had been without an Executive Government, Metcalfe was told by one of the ablest, the most clear-headed, and the

most experienced men in the country, that it was impossible to form a Ministry, according to the recognised principles of Responsible Government, without the aid of the French-Canadian party, and that that aid it was impossible to obtain.

What, then, was to be done? It was apparent that the want of an Executive Government was beginning to have a disastrous effect upon the colony. The same high authority assured Metcalfe that the necessity for filling up the vacant appointments was becoming hourly more pressing—that the long delay which had already occurred was calculated to injure the commercial credit of the country—that the revenue would be speedily affected—that the want of a responsible officer to represent the Crown in the courts of justice was already proving a great public inconvenience—that men's minds were being unsettled and unhinged—and that vague apprehensions of evil were beginning to paralyse the industrial energies of the country.

It was necessary, then, to form a Ministry—but how? To recall Baldwin and Lafontaine would be publicly to acknowledge a defeat, to lower the dignity of the Crown, and to pave the way for new embarrassments, which might be more insuperable than the old. To form a Ministry without them, and, therefore, without the support of the French-Canadian party in the Assembly, would be to form a Ministry incapable of carrying on the Government according to the principles of Responsible Government; that is, through a majority in the Assembly—for no such majority could be obtained.

From this dilemma there was one possible means of escape, which to the English politician will readily suggest itself. The Governor-General had the power of dissolving the Assembly, and appealing to the loyalty of the province. But it was the opinion of Mr. Draper, that

although in Upper Canada the answer to such an appeal might be favourable, in Lower Canada it would be the reverse; and that the aggregate result would not be such as to secure a majority in the House. The experiment, Metcalfe was assured, was not likely to be successful; and yet it was the only resource, in the midst of these unexampled difficulties, which seemed to afford a glimmer of hope.

The crisis, indeed, was an alarming one. The constitution of Canada was at stake. "Looking beyond the immediate exigency, it was clear that if no solution of these difficulties could be found under the existing constitution, a revolutionary remedy of some kind must be applied—a remedy, as it was truly said, that "cannot be advised here." It might be the abandonment of Responsible Government, with the results of such attempted retrogression—or the severance of the existing union between the two Canadas—or the establishment of a federal union of all the North-American colonies—or anything else, either determined by, or forced from, the Imperial Government. The difficulty might be dealt with by the Crown or by the people. It was impossible to say how it was to be dealt with by the Governor-General.

If in the midst of such unprecedented embarrassment Metcalfe sometimes lamented that he had quitted the peaceful sanctuary of home to be tossed about on the stormy sea of party-politics in an American colony, who will express surprise? To one old and honoured contemporary and friend he had written, that he envied him the quiet of the Albany; and that friend wrote back to him words that were well calculated to stir his spirit at such a time, and to fill him with new courage. "If you thought only of your own comfort and content," wrote Mountstuart Elphinstone, "or if you were convinced that you were past more useful employment, you might enjoy your repose with as good a conscience as I do;

but if I had the energy and ability to fill such a place as yours, I would not give the few months of your approaching crisis for a hundred years of unprofitable enjoyment."

They were noble words, and Metcalfe felt the full force of the appeal. In the midst of all discouraging circumstances he was not discouraged. He was sustained by the honesty of his purpose. He knew that he could but do his best. He felt that what others could do he also could do, and that if he failed at last, it would be only because success was beyond human reach. He was resolute not to abandon the great game before him until he had exhausted every possible means of bringing it to a triumphant issue. Foiled in his efforts to obtain the coadjutancy of one statesman, he addressed himself to another. The Attorney-Generalship of Lower Canada, which had been held by Mr. Lafontaine, was offered in succession to four leading men of the French-Canadian party; but on various pretexts declined by all. Not one in the excited state of the public mind in Lower Canada had courage so to brave the opinions of his countrymen.

A more curious social phenomenon than that presented by the state of public feeling among the French-Canadians, Metcalfe, in all his experience of men, had never witnessed before. They had been described to him in England, and they had been described to him in Canada, as a remarkably amiable, gentle, and contented race of men, with a primitive simplicity about them that was truly engaging. What Lord Gosford had told him in the old country, and Mr. Draper in the new, his own experience continually confirmed. When he first learnt that these quiet, ignorant, harmless, patriarchal people were very hot-headed and violent partisans, Metcalfe asked if the irritation of the people were the work of the priests. But the suspicion, natural as it was, was an injustice to the French-Canadian

clergy. All authorities concurred in saying, that the mischief was done principally by the lawyers—advocates, notaries, and others of the same race; and partly by the *médecins* of the province. Instilling into the minds of the people, by imperceptible degrees, opinions hostile to the British race, these educated and influential men prepared them to be the blind and headlong followers of their party-leaders. It is the natural tendency of injustice and oppression to make the many lean upon the few. The French-Canadians knew that they had suffered; believed that they had been wronged; and though tardy reparation had been made to them, they were still prepared to imbibe the lessons instilled into them by their teachers—still inclined to believe that justice would not be done to them unless they supported the men who were fighting their battles against a selfish and a dominant faction.

Thus instructed, they united almost as one man to support those who had put themselves forward most prominently as the supporters of their claims against the exclusiveness of the English, and believed that the only sure test of sincerity was opposition to the dominant race. It was generally said, that even their most popular leaders lost influence when they took office. They were assuredly now very powerful since their rupture with the Governor-General. It was almost certain that any member of the Assembly taking office in the new Government would lose his seat in the House, and be proscribed by his countrymen. But still Metcalfe did not cease from his efforts to construct a Ministry representing in fair proportions all the parties in the State.

The longer, however, the negotiations with the French-Canadian party were kept open, the more apparent it became that they were blindly following Baldwin and Lafontaine; and that unless these popular leaders were admitted to the Council, there was no hope of any assist-

ance from their followers. In vain Metcalfe offered to receive another member of the late Council—Mr. Morin—a more moderate politician and a more trustworthy man. It was answered, that he was without influence; and it was plain that such a compromise would not satisfy the party. Mr. Draper had not taken too desponding a view of the case. There was nothing between the admission of Baldwin and Lafontaine and the entire abandonment of the support of the French-Canadians in the Assembly and in the province at large. The difficulty, therefore, seemed to thicken. Before the middle of August, Metcalfe had ceased to hope for any coadjutancy in that quarter, and had formed the resolution to construct a new administration without the aid of the French-Canadian party. But the candidates for office in the Executive Council were few. For every other description of official employment there were applicants without number. But employment, depending upon the votes of the House of Assembly, was not coveted by men who could turn their talents to better account. The Ministerial salaries were small. On an average, they did not exceed 1,000*l.* a year. Under the system of Responsible Government such offices were always precarious; but now, in the existing posture of public affairs, the incertitude of their tenure was extreme. Statesmanship in Canada had not risen to an independent position, but was an appendage to the more certain support of professional occupation. When a man was invited to take office in the Executive Council, he was frequently in effect solicited to make large personal sacrifices. Patriotism was not, in Canada, a plant of more luxurious growth than in other parts of the world where the value of money is well understood. So it happened that when Metcalfe, abandoning the idea of bringing the French-Canadians into his Council, endeavoured to form a Ministry containing, in fair proportions, the representatives

of the two British parties, he was nearly being wrecked on the rocks of personal interest. Men who would have taken office were deterred by cogent private considerations from joining the standard of the Governor-General. In some instances, prosperous, and in others embarrassed, pecuniary circumstances stood in the way of arrangements that otherwise might have been made; and time after time, therefore, Metcalfe encountered disappointment just when he thought himself at the point of success.

In spite, however, of these difficulties—in spite of the ever-recurring obstacles presented by the incompatibility of the two parties—the Constitutionalists and the Reformers, whom he endeavoured to bring into harmonious action—Metcalfe resolutely persevered in his efforts to form a Council. Before the middle of August he reported that the Attorney-Generalship of Lower Canada had been offered to six gentlemen—four French and two English—and perseveringly declined by all. But he made a seventh offer of the appointment, and at last it was accepted. Little by little he added to the strength of his new Ministry; and on the 27th of August he reported to the Colonial Office that he "expected, in a few days, to be able to announce the completion of the Executive Council of the province." His persevering efforts were about at last to be crowned with success.

At the head of this new administration were Mr. Viger, Mr. Draper, and Mr. Daly, who throughout all his difficulties had adhered faithfully to the Governor-General. The first was to be President of the Council; the second, Attorney-General for Upper Canada; whilst the third still retained his old post of Provincial Secretary for Lower Canada. Associated with these functionaries now for the first time were Mr. Morris, one of the most respected and respectable men in the province, who accepted the office of Receiver-General; Mr. D. B. Papineau, Commissioner of

Crown Lands; and Mr. Smith, Attorney-General for Lower Canada. The first was a man of moderate opinions. He had been conspicuous in his opposition to the old exclusiveness of the dominant faction, but having subsequently arrayed himself against the late Council, he had been scouted by them as a Tory; and some men had hesitated to join an administration of which he was a member, lest the same imputation should be made against them. But in reality, though a loyalist, he was a man of liberal sentiments; and whilst the greatest possible assistance was likely to be derived by the Executive Council from his excellent habits of business, no collision of opinion was anticipated. Mr. Papineau, a brother of the leader who had rendered himself so conspicuous during the recent troubles, was a French-Canadian of good abilities and unimpeachable character, whom Metcalfe would have earlier invited to his councils, but for the general belief that the infirmity of deafness, by which he was afflicted, would render him unwilling to accept office—perhaps, incapable of holding it. But as soon as it was found that the defect had been exaggerated and that there was nothing really to impair his administrative efficiency, Metcalfe at once offered him the Commissionership of Crown Lands, and had no reason to regret the choice. The good sense and excellent judgment, which he exhibited in council, commended him greatly to the Governor-General, who was well pleased with his colleague; and not less so with the new Attorney-General for Lower Canada, Mr. Smith, a respectable member of the Montreal bar, of whom Metcalfe said, that, although the appointment had been long in reaching him, there was every reason to be satisfied with the result. He was a sensible and moderate man of right principles; and although he had not previously occupied a seat in the Legislature, there was

little doubt that his forensic habits would qualify him for Parliamentary debate.

Having thus filled the six most important offices in the Executive Council, Metcalfe believed that he was in a position to meet his Parliament. But it was certain that in the Representative Assembly, as then constituted, he could not command a majority. So the question of dissolution was debated in the Council. Five of the members were in favour of the step; whilst one only opposed it. If a majority, however small, could have been calculated upon, Metcalfe himself would have preferred meeting the old Parliament. But there was no reasonable ground for such a hope; so the Governor-General, not without strong reluctance,* consented to an appeal to the province. New writs were issued; preparations were made for the coming struggle. And, in the meanwhile, it was determined that the minor offices in the Council need not be filled until the results of the election had appeared. The vacant appointments might then be bestowed on men who had

* Not because he was fearful of the result, but because he had told the old Parliament that he would meet them again, and he wished that the promise should be literally fulfilled. Metcalfe thus explained the principal arguments in favour of the dissolution in a letter to Lord Stanley: "Several disposed to support the Government would have been embarrassed by their former vote; and the session being the last of the Parliament, all of the members returned as belonging to the party called in Upper Canada Reformers, would have been too much in awe of their constituents to act independently. The Opposition would easily have put forward questions that would have been embarrassing to many, and they might have contrived to go to the country at a new election, which would necessarily have followed either immediately or in a few months, with some popular delusion operating in their favour. Defeat alone would have been a disparagement to the Government, and of bad influence on the subsequent elections."

secured their return to Parliament. "I regard the approaching election," wrote Metcalfe, on the 26th of September, "as a very important crisis, the result of which will demonstrate whether the majority of her Majesty's Canadian subjects are disposed to have responsible government in union with British connection and supremacy, or will struggle for a sort of government that is impracticable consistently with either."

The great struggle was now about to commence. In all parts of the province the excitement was extreme. In some there were apprehensions of riot and bloodshed. Inflammatory hand-bills were in circulation, and violent placards posted on the walls. Large bodies of Irish labourers were in motion, hired, it was reported to the Governor-General, to keep freedom of election in control by club-law. In expectation of serious disturbances, the troops were ordered to hold themselves in readiness in all places where danger threatened. The contest was between loyalty on the one side, and disaffection to her Majesty's Government on the other. That there was a strong anti-British feeling abroad, in both divisions of the province, Metcalfe clearly and painfully perceived. The conviction served to brace and stimulate him to new exertions. He felt that he was fighting for his Sovereign against a rebellious people.

The elections terminated in favour of Government. But many of them were hardly and violently contested. In Lower Canada, Mr. Viger, Metcalfe's new President of the Council, was defeated in a contest for the Richelieu county, by Dr. Nelson, who had been transported to Bermuda for the part taken by him in the recent rebellion; whilst in Upper Canada, Mr. Hincks, one of the most ardent and intemperate members of the old Council, was defeated, for Oxford county, by the Government candidate, Mr. Riddell. Mr. Smith, the new Attorney-General for Lower Canada,

beat the Opposition candidate in that division of the province; whilst Mr. Morin, one of the French-Canadian members of the late Council, was returned for two of its counties. In Lower Canada the elections generally went against the Government, but the majority in Upper Canada more than counterbalanced the loss sustained at the hands of the French-Canadians. So that when on the 23rd of November, 1844, Metcalfe reported the aggregate results of the elections to the Colonial Office, he was able to show that forty-six of the members returned were avowed supporters of Government; twenty-eight, avowed adversaries; and nine, undeclared or uncertain. "The results," he added, "showed that loyalty and British feeling prevail in Upper Canada and in the eastern townships of Lower Canada; and that disaffection is predominant among the French-Canadian constituencies. By disaffection I mean an anti-British feeling, by whatever name it ought to be called, or whatever be its foundation, which induces habitually a readiness to oppose her Majesty's Government."*

Having secured this undoubted triumph by fair and honourable means, Metcalfe now began to bethink himself of his future course. "My own views," he wrote to the Colonial Secretary, "are to cherish and encourage the spirit of loyalty and attachment to British connection, which the result of the election proves to be predominant in those of British descent, and, at the same time, to act

* Metcalfe was of opinion that the victory would have been more decisive, if, for some time past, the loyalists had not been discouraged by want of support. "Whenever inquiry," he said, "is made as to the listlessness evinced by the British party in every part of the province, the reply is, that they cannot rely on her Majesty's Government; that they have been repeatedly abandoned and sacrificed to their enemies; and that of late years the most successful course in this colony has been in rebellion and hostility to British connection."

with equal justice to all races, creeds, and parties; to reward merit wherever it is to be found, to the extent of my means, and to abolish exclusion; thus endeavouring to amalgamate all parties and to mitigate, if I cannot extinguish, that feeling of disaffection which, from whatever cause it may arise, is the bane of the colony." He had a Council composed of moderate men, representing all races. They were not, it must be admitted, men of so much mark and likelihood—men so able and so energetic, as those who had preceded them in office. But they were men of sound judgment and active business habits—a good working Ministry in whom Metcalfe could confide. With these men, representing the Responsible Government, which was to direct the affairs of the colony, through the majority thus secured in the House of Assembly, Metcalfe now proposed, after the interval of a year of disorganization and trouble, to meet his new Parliament.

The seat of Government had by this time been removed to Montreal, and there now the Houses were opened. As in the mother country, when party-spirit runs high, the first battle of a new parliament is often that fought for the election of a Speaker, so did it now happen with the Colonial Assembly. The supporters of the Government recommended Sir Allan MacNab, a loyalist, who had been knighted for his services as a colonel of militia during the recent rebellion; whilst the Opposition brought forward the claims of Mr. Morin. With two exceptions—one of them being Mr. Papineau, a member of the Government—the French-Canadians unanimously supported the latter; and all the opponents of Government ranged themselves on the same side. But, in spite of this untoward combination, the Ministerial candidate was voted into the chair by a majority of three.*

* There were 39 votes for MacNab, and 36 for Morin. Six members had not joined, and there was one vacant seat.

The next division was on the Address. There was a long and stormy debate of three days' duration; but it ended, in favour of Government, by a majority of six.* From that time, all through the Session, the majority was steadily maintained. But Metcalfe could not disguise from himself that the Government was not strong—that it was continually on the brink of defeat—and that it was only enabled to uphold its position by resorting to shifts and expedients, or what are called "tactics," which, in his inmost soul, Metcalfe abhorred. He was not by nature at all a tactician; and he had not been trained in the intricate manœuvres of party warfare. It was not, indeed, one of the least of his annoyances, at this time, that he was compelled to sanction a departure from that open, straightforward course of political conduct which he had all his life been steadfastly pursuing. He fell very slowly and reluctantly into the manœuvring ways common to party-leaders. I do not mean that he did, or sanctioned, anything incompatible with public virtue as it is commonly understood—anything from which the most immaculate party-leader in Europe would have shrunk. But he was out of his element as a manœuvrer. He felt that when he sanctioned a recourse, even to the ordinary tactics of party, by which threatened defeats are converted into actual victories,† he descended from the high position which he had previously occupied throughout nearly half

* Equal to a majority of about 50 in our House of Commons.

† For example, being aware that the French-Canadian party in the House intended to move an Address to the throne, praying that the existing restrictions on the use of the French language in legislative proceedings might be annulled, the Executive Council proposed that they should anticipate the Opposition by introducing the measure themselves. There were instructions from the Imperial Government forbidding such a proceeding; but it was expedient to disarm the Opposition, and Metcalfe consented that the Address should be moved by Mr. Papineau.

a century of public service, and became, in his own estimation, something of a trickster.

Under all circumstances, it was a great thing to have struggled through the session without a defeat; but Metcalfe, when he came to review, at the end of it, the eventful history of the last few months, could not delude himself with the belief that his position was a secure one, or that there was not serious danger of the occurrence of new embarrassments, again to retard the progress of public business, and to convulse the province from one end to the other. His Ministry was composed of respectable men; but they wanted influence, and, perhaps, in some cases they wanted energy. The Council was not complete; and it was not united. A serious difference of opinion regarding the religious discipline of the King's College University threatened to place Government in a minority, and to break up the new Ministry. One of the members of the Council—Mr. Robinson, who had been appointed Solicitor-General for Lower Canada—resigned; and the bill which had been introduced by Government was abandoned, in prospect of its rejection. These were serious discouragements. "During nine months of last year," wrote Metcalfe to the Colonial Secretary, "I was labouring in vain to complete my Council; and I have now again to fish in troubled waters for an Inspector-General, and for a Lower Canada Solicitor-General." The Ministry, indeed, instead of growing stronger, was growing weaker; and the Governor-General was assured by its most influential member that it could not possibly survive without an infusion of new vigour.

The Ministers wanted weight and influence; and therefore, the supporters of the Government wanted union and stability. It was doubtful whether the latter could be kept together throughout another session. "The party is strong enough," said Metcalfe, in May, 1845, "with the

occasional aid of other independent members, to maintain a working majority in the house, if it would keep that object steadily in view and avoid inadequate causes of dissension; but I am apprehensive, from what has already passed, that this degree of wisdom cannot be relied on, and that the seeds of division and weakness have been sown partly by the difference which occurred on the University question, partly by individual discontent, and partly by the want of popularity of the members of the Executive Council. It is remarkable that none of the Executive Council, although all are estimable and respectable, exercise any great influence over the party which support the Government. Such were the allies with which Metcalfe had now to maintain his victorious position against the compact serried ranks of the French-Canadians, commanded by popular leaders, in whom habitual confidence was reposed.

If the compact union of the enemy could be dissolved, the continued success of the Government might be secured. But this could only be the work of time. In the mean while, there was much cause of anxiety:

"The prospects of division in the next Legislative Assembly," wrote Metcalfe, in the confidential despatch quoted above, "among the supporters who carried the Government safely and creditably through the last, naturally produces considerable anxiety, which suggests different projects to different minds. My own opinion is that every effort should be made, consistently with right principle, to keep together the majority which exists, and so to satisfy the opponents of the Government, that a mere factious opposition, without regard to measures, for the sole purpose of overthrowing the Government, will not succeed; and if this conviction can be established, I have little doubt that the compact union of the French party, which at present exists, will eventually be dissolved."

He was not without a hope, indeed, that the French-Canadian party would soon grow weary of failure, and finding that they had no longer any real grievances of

which to complain, begin to discover that systematic opposition to Government was both unreasonable and unprofitable. In the mean while, it was necessary that he should remain at his post, as the only chance of keeping his party together. That the strong feeling of animosity against himself, which existed in the minds of Lafontaine and Baldwin, kept alive the ardour and virulence of the opposition, Metcalfe was not suffered to doubt. If his withdrawal from the Government would have brought about a reconciliation, which would have preserved the colony and strengthened the failing loyalty of the province, he would have instantly withdrawn. But he had no such hope. He said that his departure would be regarded as a victory, and that there would be no amelioration of feeling towards either her Majesty's Government or their fellow-subjects. The predominance of the French party would still be the main object of contest, and any success in such a contest would increase the difficulty of amalgamation, and bind the French phalanx more tightly together." He knew that his opponents were endeavouring, by every possible means,* to disseminate a belief in

* A curious illustration of the various means employed to keep this impression alive, is afforded by the following passage in one of Metcalfe's confidential letters: "They rest their expectation," he wrote, "of a return to power on the prospect of my retirement from the Government, and from the time of their quitting office their partisans have been actively employed in circulating reports of the approximation of that event. So much importance is attached by the party to a general belief among their followers of the certainty of this occurrence, that in the French paper, the *Minerve*, the organ of that party, those passages of my speech at the close of the session, which contained the words 'our next meeting,' and 'until we meet again,' are translated so as to convert those words into 'your next session,' and 'until your return.' Another French paper, the *Aurore*, noticed the mis-translation, and exposed the design. But the *Aurore* is excommunicated, and the *Minerve* is the only paper read to the mass of the French-Canadians."

the intended departure of the Governor-General, and counting upon a speedy return to office. They were watching, indeed, the progress of the disease which was destroying him, and calculating that it must soon drive him either to England or to the grave.

Metcalfe had always declared that he would not be a cypher; and it was now, indeed, the strong individuality of the man which rendered it so necessary to the success of his antagonists, and so fatal to the interests of his own party, that in such a conjuncture he should abandon his post. He had now, in the summer of 1845, been carrying everything before him by the mere force of his personal character. His explanations to the Assembly, and his answers to the provincial addresses on the subject of the rupture with his late Council—so frank, so honest, and, above all, so liberal in their recognition of the principles of responsible government—had done more than anything else to secure the success of the Government candidates in the general election, and to maintain a majority in the House from the beginning to the end of the session. All the strength of the Government, indeed, was in the Governor-General himself. Whilst he remained at his post the constitutional party might be kept together; and the longer he maintained the ascendency of government in the Legislative Assembly—the longer he demonstrated, by a continued course of just and conciliatory conduct, that he was the friend of all parties—the greater would be the probability of the gradual decay of the united strength of the French-Canadians, and the establishment of peace, and good-will, and loyalty towards the throne, from one end of the colony to the other.*

* From the following passage in one of Metcalfe's last elaborate confidential despatches, a clear conception may be gathered of the feelings with which he regarded his position at this time: "It will be seen," he wrote in May, 1845, "from the description of parties

So Metcalfe resolved to remain at his post as long as he could render any service to the sovereign and the people whom he loved. "I remain at my post," he wrote to a friend, in March, 1845, "because I am apprehensive that mischief will follow my departure; otherwise I should eagerly seek the retirement and repose which are necessary for the little bodily comfort that I may still hope to experience."

But his enemies did not err when they calculated that his days among them were numbered.

which I have submitted, that the two parties in Lower and Upper Canada, which I regard as disaffected, have a bitter animosity against me; and if it should ever become necessary to admit these parties again into power, in preference to standing a collision with the Legislative Assembly, a case would arise in which my presence here might be rather prejudicial than beneficial, as it would be impossible for me to place the slightest confidence in the leaders of these parties. If any such necessity should occur in my time, it would cause an embarrassment much more serious to me than any difficulty that I have hitherto had to encounter. Whatever my duty might dictate I trust I should be ready to perform; but I cannot contemplate the possibility of co-operating with any satisfaction to myself with men of whom I entertain the opinions that I hold with regard to the leaders of these parties. Such an embarrassment will not be impossible if any portion of the present majority fall off, or become insensible of the necessity of adhering together. It is with a view to avert such a calamity that I consider my continuance at my post to be important at the present period, as a change in the head of the Government might easily lead to the result which I deprecate, and which it will be my study to prevent as long as I see any prospect of success."

CHAPTER XV.

[1844—1845.]

THE PEERAGE.

Metcalfe's Difficulties—His Sufferings—Progress of his Malady—Intimation of a Peerage—Letters from the Queen, Sir Robert Peel, and Lord Stanley—Continuance in the Colony—Increased Sufferings—Correspondence with Lord Stanley—Departure from Canada.

I AM afraid that I have conveyed but a faint impression of the difficulties which beset Metcalfe's path at this period of his career. He used to say, that no one but himself and his friend and private secretary, Captain Higginson, had any conception of them. Only his fine temper, his high courage, and his sustaining sense of rectitude, could have enabled him to bear up against such trials. "I never witnessed," said one who had had a long personal experience of the anxieties and irritations of Canadian politics* —"I never witnessed such patience under provocation. I am speaking now of what I saw myself, and could not have believed without seeing. It was not merely quiet endurance, but a constant good-humoured cheerfulness and lightness of heart in the midst of trouble enough to provoke a saint or make a strong man ill. To those who, like me, have seen three Governors of Canada literally worried to death, this was a glorious spectacle."

* Mr. E. Gibbon Wakefield. "View of Sir Charles Metcalfe's Government of Canada."

But rightly to understand what these heroic powers of endurance were, it must ever be borne in mind that they were exercised under the depressing influence of a malignant disorder, which was eating into his life. On his first arrival in Canada some favourable symptoms had developed themselves; but they were evanescent and deceptive. Dr. O'Shaughnessy,* who had accompanied him to Kingston, was compelled to return to England in the early summer of 1843. He was succeeded in the medical charge of Sir Charles Metcalfe by Dr. Bradford, of the 23rd Fusiliers, who pursued the same course as his predecessor —that recommended by Sir Benjamin Brodie. In the autumn he in turn was called away by his military duties; —"and then," wrote Metcalfe, "having apparently derived no benefit from doctoring, I did without it for two or three months;"—but at the end of that time he acknowledged that he had "rather worse success on the whole without the doctors than with them;" † and two eminent practitioners of Kingston were called in to attend him. Different remedies, external and internal, were applied; but apparently with no success. At the end of March, writing of the mode of treatment adopted by these gentlemen, and of its results, he said to Mr. Martin:

"It is now left very much to nature. . . . . It has been nearly stationary, neither better nor worse, for nearly three months; but it got rapidly worse while the nitric acid and arsenic mixture was applied. The doctors have recommended my return to England, and I would gladly adopt that remedy if I could with propriety do so, but public duty puts that out of the question, and no personal consideration would induce me to quit my post at present."

* Now, Sir W. O'Shaughnessy, whose name has become so honourably identified with the introduction and extension of the Electric Telegraph in India.

† *MS. Memorandum by Sir C. T. Metcalfe.*

Whilst Sir Charles Metcalfe was writing the letter from which this passage is taken, the gentleman to whom it was addressed was earnestly considering how assistance could best be afforded to the sufferer. The application of a strong caustic, known as chloride of zinc, had been strongly recommended by Sir Benjamin Brodie; but the local practitioners, fearing its destructive effects, had hesitated to apply it. It appeared expedient, therefore, that a competent medical officer should be sent out from England to carry out the mode of treatment recommended by Brodie and Martin. The kindly solicitude, which Lord Stanley had felt and expressed, had been shared by the Queen, who declared her anxiety that some experienced surgeon should be sent out by the mail which was to leave England at the beginning of the following month. Mr. Martin and Mr. Brownrigg had both placed themselves in communication with the Colonial Secretary, and the result was that Mr. George Pollock,* one of the House-Surgeons of St. George's Hospital, in whom both Brodie and Martin had unbounded confidence, was despatched by the April steamer to Canada.

On the 27th of that month Sir Charles Metcalfe wrote to Mr. Martin:

"I am most thankful to you and Sir Benjamin Brodie for all your kindness; and I shall be obliged to you if you will tell him that I am very sensible of it. Mr. Pollock is arrived. He is very agreeable and winning in his manners; and his conversation, reputation, and experience afford encouragement. He is about to have a consultation with my other doctors, and will afterwards, I conclude, proceed to business. I shall put myself entirely in his hands, and abide by his judgment and treatment."

The most sanguine expectations were entertained in England that the remedy now prescribed by Sir Benjamin Brodie, and under minute instructions from him administered by one thoroughly acquainted with its uses and

* Son of General Sir George Pollock, G.C.B.

capable of judging of its effects, would produce the desired result. But the disorder had reached a stage at which no human skill could arrest its progress. As the year advanced, its ravages became more and more apparent—its effects more and more distressing. For some years it had been attended with little natural pain; but now it had not only become locally painful, but was attended with more remote symptoms of a most afflicting character. Towards the end of the year it entirely destroyed the sight of one of his eyes.

Until this calamity befel him, he had written all his public and private letters with his own hand. Even brief formal despatches, acknowledging or enclosing other communications, he had drafted himself; but now he was, to his sore distress, compelled to use the hand of another. The last autograph despatch which I can find is dated December 21st, 1844. Not many days afterwards he transmitted to Mr. Martin the following painful account of himself:

SIR CHARLES METCALFE TO MR. J. R. MARTIN.

"*Montreal, January*, 3, 1845.

"My Dear Martin,—I have three kind letters of yours unanswered. So long as I had the use of my eyes, I hoped that a day would come when I could take up my pen and thank you for them; but to do that now I am obliged to borrow the aid of another hand, as my right eye is quite blind, and the other cannot be exerted with impunity. I am compelled to abstain almost entirely from reading and writing, both of which operations are performed for me; thus much is in explanation of my not writing to you with my own hand.

"Pollock has quitted me on his return to London. I am exceedingly sorry to part with him, not only as a medical adviser, of whose skill and judgment I have a high opinion, and who had acquired considerable experience regarding the state of my complaint, but also as a most agreeable companion in whose society I had great pleasure. Highly as I think of Pollock, I have lost all faith in chloride of zinc; that powerful but destructive remedy has been applied over and over again without efficacy, to the same parts of my cheek.

"The disease remains uneradicated, and has spread to the eye and taken away its sight. This at least is my opinion, although I am bound to hesitate in entertaining it, as I am not sure that Pollock is satisfied of the extension of the actual disease to the eye, but if it be not the disease which has produced the blindness it must be the remedy. I am inclined, however, to believe that it is in reality the disease—both from appearances and from the continual pain. The complaint appears to me to have taken possession of the whole of that side of the face, although the surface is not so much ulcerated as it has heretofore been. I feel pain and tenderness in the head, above the eye and down the right side of the face as far as the chin: the cheek towards the nose and mouth being permanently swelled. I cannot open my mouth to its usual width, and have difficulty in inserting and masticating pieces of food. After all that has been done in vain, I am disposed to believe that a perfect cure is hopeless; I am nevertheless in the hands of a doctor, who is inclined to follow Pollock's course, and by whose judgment I shall implicitly abide.

"Having no hope of a cure, my chief anxiety now regards my remaining eye, which sympathises so much with the other that I am not without fear of total blindness, which is not a comfortable prospect, although if it should come, I shall consider it my duty to resign myself to it with cheerfulness. Under these circumstances, you will readily imagine that I should be very glad if I could return home, both for the chance of benefit from the medical skill that is to be found in the metropolis, and independently of that, for the sake of retirement and repose, which are requisite for an invalid such as I now am; but I cannot reconcile it to my own sense of duty to quit my post in the present state of affairs in this country. I have no doubt of the generous readiness of her Majesty's Government to meet any application that I might make for permission to return; but I have myself no inclination to abandon the loyal portion of the community in Canada, who in the recent crisis have made a noble and successful stand in support of her Majesty's Government. Until, therefore, I see a satisfactory state of things so far confirmed as to afford assurance that it will be lasting, notwithstanding my departure, I shall not entertain any idea of my own retirement so long as I have bodily and mental health sufficient for the performance of the duties of my office.

"I have entered into this long detail of my condition under the conviction that your friendship and kindness will prevent its being tedious.

"With my best regards to Mrs. Martin, and cordial wishes for you and yours,

"I remain, ever,

"Yours most sincerely and affectionately,

"C. T. METCALFE."

When Sir Charles Metcalfe wrote this letter he knew that it was one of the last to which his well-known initials would ever be affixed. In his boyhood, on first learning that his father had been created a baronet, he had declared that he would raise the younger branch of the family to the same honours.* And now the dreams of his youth were about to be more than fulfilled. He was about to sign himself "Metcalfe," as a Peer of the Realm.

Whether Sir Charles Metcalfe ever thought that the honour of the Peerage ought to have been conferred upon him before, I do not know. But many of his friends, especially those who knew best the great services he had rendered in Jamaica, were strongly of this opinion. Before he quitted that island it had been proposed that a general memorial, signed by the inhabitants, should be addressed to the Queen, praying her to confer some especial mark of her favour on the statesman who had conferred upon them so many blessings. But the proposal had not been encouraged by Metcalfe himself. He wished that there should be no interference. He would not have asked for himself, and he did not desire that others should be petitioners for him. Circumstances were against him at the time. The services he had rendered to his country had been rendered under a Whig Ministry; and when he quitted Jamaica the Tories were at the helm. At a later period there seem to have been obstacles to his elevation to the Peerage, well understood by men acquainted with the ministerial secrets of the day. Some of Metcalfe's friends wrote to him that there were so many men in England

* See *ante*, Vol. I. page 98.

hungering after nobility, that Peel had declared he would not complete the work of the Whigs by swamping the House of Lords. But the case of Sir Charles Metcalfe had now become a special and exceptional one. There were both public and personal reasons why, at such a time, it should be clearly and unmistakeably manifested that his services were appreciated by the Ministers, and that he was supported and upheld by the Crown. In the great struggle which was pending between the Governor-General of Canada and the popular branch of the Legislature, it was expedient that all possible weight should be given to the authority of the former—that in such a juncture the trumpet of the Imperial Government should give no uncertain sound. But I believe that when Lord Stanley suggested to the First Minister that the time had now arrived for conferring upon Sir Charles Metcalfe a special mark of her Majesty's favour, he was moved as much by his generous admiration of the heroic constancy of the man who, under the pressure of the severest bodily suffering, was steadfastly pursuing the path of duty, and with surprising energy and resolution fighting the battles of the Crown—as much, I say, by his generous admiration of the patience and fortitude of the man as by his sense of the prestige and authority to be conferred upon the Governor-General.* He was eager to alleviate—as far as

* The letters presently given in the text afford such striking indications of this predominant feeling of sympathy, that nothing need be added to them; but I still cannot resist the pleasure of giving a passage from another letter written a fortnight before. "I learn with very great and sincere concern," wrote Lord Stanley on the 17th of November, "how much you are still suffering; and I anxiously hope, both on public and on private grounds, that the anticipations of your medical attendant may be realised, and that the affection of your sight may prove to be but temporary. It is a sad addition to the political difficulties with which you have had, and I am afraid I must add still have, to contend, though your

human agency could alleviate or compensate—the sufferings of so brave and true-hearted a man.

Racked by the severest bodily anguish; threatened with total loss of sight; fearful that he would soon be deprived of the power of articulation; Charles Metcalfe now saw that the dreams of his youth were about to be gloriously realised. The first December mail from England brought him letters which once would have stirred his heart with wild emotion, but which now, in his darkened room, could impart only a subdued and chastened feeling of gratitude and content. They announced, in the following words, that the Sovereign had signified her gracious intention of creating her faithful servant a Peer of the Realm:—

LORD STANLEY TO SIR CHARLES METCALFE.

"*Downing-street, December* ?, 1844.

"SIR,—I have received the Queen's commands to signify to you her Majesty's high approbation of the zeal, ability, and prudence which you have displayed in the discharge of the arduous duties which have been entrusted to you as her Majesty's representative in Canada, at a period when the possession of those qualities by the Governor-General was eminently called for, and has been fully tested; and I have much pleasure in being further commanded to inform you that, as a mark of her Majesty's appreciation of your

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last report leads me to entertain very sanguine hopes that your prudence and moderation will be rewarded by a majority in the House of Assembly in support of your Government. At such a moment, with the victory almost won, we more than ever require that the same hand which has gained it, if it be gained, should conduct the movement of the machinery which has been constructed, and reap the fruits of the successful contest; and I feel at the same time how much your claims on the consideration of the Queen's Government are strengthened by the circumstance of your having devoted your energy and ability to their service with so much success in the midst of so much physical suffering as I fear you have had to undergo. I trust the next mail will assure us of your complete triumph, and will also contain a favourable report of your health."

distinguished services, her Majesty has been pleased to intimate her gracious intention of conferring upon you the honour of a Baronet of the United Kingdom. When I shall learn from you the title by which you are desirous of being called to the House of Peers, the necessary instructions shall forthwith be given.

"I cannot make this announcement without offering to you my congratulations on this well-earned mark of her Majesty's favour, and assuring you how much pleasure it affords me personally to be the medium of so gratifying a communication.

"I have the honour to be, Sir,

"Your obedient, humble servant,

"STANLEY."

SIR ROBERT PEEL TO SIR CHARLES METCALFE.

Whitehall, December 1, 1844.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I have great satisfaction in submitting to her Majesty my advice that, as a public mark of her Majesty's cordial approbation of the judgment, ability, and fidelity with which you have discharged the important trust confided to you by her Majesty, the distinction of the Peerage should be conferred upon you.

"I would say more if I did not feel assured that the most gratifying communication that I could make to you is the simple transmission of a copy of the letter which her Majesty was pleased to write to me, signifying her Majesty's hearty approval of the proposal which it was my gratifying duty to make to her Majesty.

I have the honour to be,

"My dear sir, with sincere esteem,

"Most faithfully yours,

"ROBERT PEEL."

SIR ROBERT PEEL TO THE QUEEN.

"*Whitehall, November* 30, 1844.

"Sir Robert Peel, with his humble duty to your Majesty, begs leave to submit for your Majesty's favourable consideration the claim of Sir Charles Metcalfe for some distinguished mark of your Majesty's approbation.

"Lord Stanley is strongly impressed with the belief that such a proof of your Majesty's confidence and favour would greatly strengthen him in the execution of his arduous task were it

announced at the eventful crisis of the opening of the Canadian Legislature, which will assemble early in December.

"Sir C. Metcalfe has persevered in the discharge of his public duties amidst every difficulty that factious combination could offer to him, and under the pressure of severe and depressing bodily suffering.

"Sir Robert Peel humbly recommends to your Majesty that, for the purpose of marking your Majesty's cordial approbation of the services of a most able and faithful officer of the Crown, of aiding him in the discharge of a most important public trust, and of giving confidence and animation to the Canadian friends and supporters of Sir Charles Metcalfe, and of connection with the mother country, Sir Charles Metcalfe should receive the honour of an English Barony, and that your Majesty's gracious commands in this respect should be notified to him by the next mail, if your Majesty be pleased to approve of his elevation to the Peerage."

THE QUEEN TO SIR ROBERT PEEL.

"*Windsor Castle, November* 30, 1844.

The Queen hastens to answer Sir Robert Peel's letter of this morning relative to Sir Charles Metcalfe. The Queen most highly approves Sir Robert Peel's suggestion that Sir Charles Metcalfe should be raised to the Peerage; for he has shown such a desire to do his duty in the midst of so many difficulties, and such extreme disinterestedness, that he richly deserves this mark of the Queen's entire approbation and favour."

With these official letters came also private letters from Lord Stanley, written in a spirit of sympathy with Metcalfe's sufferings and admiration of his conduct, which might have cheered his heart under any affliction:

LORD STANLEY TO SIR CHARLES METCALFE.

"*Downing-street, December* 2, 1844.

"MY DEAR SIR CHARLES,—My public despatch of this date will have formally communicated to you the Queen's gracious intentions towards you; but I cannot allow the mail to go out without saying, in less official language, how much pleasure I have in making this announcement to you, and how well I think you have deserved the honour. I assure you that the Queen, as

well as the members of the Government, fully appreciate all the sacrifice which you have made in remaining, under circumstances of so much bodily suffering as you have experienced, at a post where constant vigilance, much mental anxiety, and a degree of patience *à tout épreuve*, were necessary conditions of a chance of final success. I hope and believe that you have completely succeeded; and if your health be such as to enable you for some time longer to guide the vessel which you have launched under such promising auspices, I have little fear but that good will arise out of the late evils, and the Government of Canada may long be conducted on constitutional principles, and in close connection with the mother country.

"Your confidential despatch only arrived on Friday; and upon its receipt I lost no time in communicating with Sir Robert Peel, and expressing to him my strong opinion that the opening of the session under such circumstances was *the* time at which the honour of a peerage might be conferred upon you with most satisfaction to yourself and with most advantage to the public service, as marking in the strongest and most decisive manner how entirely the Queen's Government approve, and are prepared to support, the line of policy which you have indicated, and the sentiments you have expressed. Sir Robert Peel immediately wrote to the Queen a letter, of which, by his permission, I enclose you a copy; and on Saturday, by return of the messenger, her Majesty sent her 'hearty' concurrence in the step proposed. I trust that the whole of this may be gratifying to you. I must remark that I look to the results of the late elections with peculiar gratification, because it appears to me that you have been most strictly forbearing with regard to the application of any personal influence; and consequently that the event, being the effect of conviction on the minds of the public at large, is more likely to be permanent than if it had been promoted by any indirect means. You will observe that I calculate throughout upon your having obtained a majority; and I feel confident that your prudence will not have allowed you to fall into the mistake of overrating your own success, or undervaluing the strength of the opposition. . . . . Once more repeating my warm congratulations and my earnest wishes for your prolonged life and improved health to enjoy your well-won honours,

"I am, dear Sir Charles,

"Yours very sincerely,

"STANLEY."

THE SAME TO THE SAME.

"*Woodcote, December* 3, 1844.

"MY DEAR SIR CHARLES,—I have this instant received, almost too late to write to you by the mail which leaves Liverpool to-night, a private account, by which I learn with the greatest regret that you are suffering far more severely than I had any idea of; and serious as would be the loss of your services at any time, but most of all at this moment, I should regret more than I can express, if, from an over-anxious sense of duty, you should remain at your post beyond the stage at which you can do so without risk of serious danger to your health. The reports which I have heard may be, and I trust are, exaggerated; still I have heard enough to make me very uneasy about you, and to induce me to beg of you not to disregard personal safety if it be seriously endangered by your longer stay. If you can remain without danger to yourself, your presence in Canada is invaluable; but you must not sacrifice yourself.

"Believe me, dear Sir Charles, yours sincerely,

"STANLEY."

To the official letter of the Colonial Secretary Sir Charles Metcalfe returned the following reply:

SIR CHARLES METCALFE TO LORD STANLEY.

"MY LORD,—I have had the honour of receiving your lordship's separate despatch of the 2nd December, signifying her Majesty's high approbation of my humble services, and further, her gracious intention of conferring on me the honour of a Barony of the United Kingdom.

"It is impossible to express in adequate terms the fervent gratitude which I feel for these and former marks of her Majesty's goodness. I can only hope that by devotion to her Majesty's service I may evince that her generous favour has not been bestowed on an undutiful subject.

"I beg permission to add my grateful thanks to your lordship for the kind sentiments with which your intimation of her Majesty's high approbation and gracious intention is accompanied.

"With reference to the expectation intimated in your letter, that I should describe the title by which I am desirous of being called to the House of Peers, I presume to submit, subject to her

Majesty's pleasure, that of 'Baron Metcalfe of Fern Hill, in the county of Berks.'

"I have the honour to be, your most obedient servant,

"C. T. METCALFE."

It has been said that half the sorrows of life are included in the little words "Too late." It would be easy, looking only at the outside of things, to make especial application of this pregnant truth—easy to moralise on the vanity of human wishes, and to show that Metcalfe had clutched a bauble, which he had yearned for all his life, when he was past the power of enjoying its possession. But they who have read aright the character of the man will make no such application of the aphorism. If Metcalfe had died that night, the honours conferred upon him by the Crown would not have come too late. They would not have come too late to convince him—not that he had done his duty, for on that subject the testimony of his conscience was most conclusive—but that what he had done was appreciated by the State which he had so faithfully served. They would not have come too late to assure him that sooner or later, even in this world, such honesty of purpose, such rectitude of conduct, such fidelity to the throne, such love for the people, such abnegation of self, as had distinguished his career of public service, will secure their reward. It would not have come too late to encourage others, and to be a lesson to the world.

The announcement of Charles Metcalfe's elevation to the peerage, intended as it was, secondarily, to be a public enunciation of the support of the Home Government, created some excitement in the colony. In both Houses of Parliament an address of congratulation was proposed. In the Legislative Assembly it was unanimously voted. In the Lower House it was of course opposed. There was a debate and a division; but the motion was carried by a majority of twenty. Many public bodies were glad

to avail themselves of the opportunity of testifying their admiration of the man who had exhibited such unexampled constancy and courage in the midst of the great difficulties which had assailed him on every side.

From his old friends in England and in India letters of congratulation soon began to pour in upon him. His own letters on the subject, written by an amanuensis, show that the chief regret which he experienced in contemplating his suffering condition in connection with the new honours conferred upon him, arose out of the conviction that he would not be able to turn them to account by becoming a useful member of the House of Peers.

To his sister, Mrs. Smythe, he wrote at the end of December:

"As I have nothing new to say regarding my eyes, which continue as they were, the one blind and the other weak, I will relieve you from the monotony of my late letters by introducing a new subject. I have received information of her Majesty's gracious intention to raise me to the Peerage, and I have been desired to state by what title I wish to be called to the House of Peers. I have proposed the following: 'Baron Metcalfe of Fern Hill, in the county of Berks.' A barony is, of course, the rank intended to be conferred, being the first step in the Peerage, and I have considered

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Among others, the Ministers and Elders of the Presbyterian (Established) Church of Canada presented an address, in which, after the subscribers had offered their congratulations, and said that they "rejoiced to live under the mild sway of a Sovereign whose most anxious desire it is to have the Government administered by the wise and faithful of the land," thus continued their assurances of loyalty in the following words, which must have brought to Metcalfe's mind, by the force of contrast, some passages of his Jamaica life:—"We as ministers of the Gospel of peace, beg leave to assure your Excellency, that as it is our duty so shall it be our diligent endeavour to alleviate the burdens of your administration, by teaching those committed to our pastoral care to fear God and honour the Sovereign, and to exemplify in their conduct the moral influence of these doctrines.

that our family name would be the most appropriate title that I could name, while 'of Fern Hill' describes the only landed property I can at present boast of possessing. I remember hearing, that when a peerage was thought of for my father, he had in view, the title of Chilton; but we have no interest in Chilton now, and I am not aware of any reason for adopting it. There was a time when I should have rejoiced in a peerage, as affording me the privilege of devoting the remainder of my life to the service of my Queen and country in the House of Lords—in my mind a most honourable and independent position; but I doubt now whether I shall ever be able to undertake that duty with any degree of efficiency. My gratification, therefore, is confined to the pleasure which must be derived from so distinguished a mark of approbation of my public services, and to that of knowing that some kind hearts will rejoice at my elevation. The mere rank and title, if divested by infirmities of the power of rendering useful service in the House of Lords, will be incumbrances, and will not add one jot to the happiness which I still hope to enjoy in living in retirement with you."

To Mr. Tucker he wrote in February:

"Incessant occupation in public business has hitherto prevented my thanking you for your kind letter of January, 1844, and I am now unable to do it with my own hand, owing to blindness in one eye, and a sympathising weakness in the other, which forces me to abstain altogether from reading and writing, lest utter darkness should follow.

"Public affairs are proceeding here more satisfactorily than I at one time expected; and my only motive for remaining here now is to see such a state of things confirmed as may enable me to depart with an assurance that it will be lasting. I am not very sanguine in my hopes for the future; but it is my duty to use my best endeavours to secure the preservation of this colony and the supremacy of the mother country. This desire keeps me at my post, although the discomfort which I suffer from the incurable complaint in my face, of which the destructive effect has now extended to my right eye, renders retirement and tranquillity more than ever desirable. . . . . I have received intimation of the gracious intention of the Queen to confer on me a peerage. As a mark of approbation of my services, this honour is, of course, highly gratifying to me; and it has been spontaneously bestowed, with so kind and cordial a feeling on the part of her

Majesty, as well as of her Ministers, that the pleasure is thereby greatly enhanced. I should rejoice still more if I could anticipate such a state of bodily health as would enable me to devote the remainder of my life to useful service in the House of Lords; but of that privilege I fear I shall be deprived, for even if I escape total blindness, I cannot expect to be anything better than an invalid for the rest of my days."

His sufferings were at this time increasing upon him. But he resolutely determined to remain at his post. In April, he wrote to Lord Stanley:

"Had it been in my power to report that the Executive Council was stable and sure to command a majority in the Legislature in future sessions, I should probably at this time have solicited permission to withdraw from the cares of office, because, although my general health seems unimpaired, the continual discomfort which I suffer from a complaint in my face which has baffled medical skill, and having destroyed the sight of one eye, still menaces further ravages, would render retirement and rest very acceptable; but I should never be satisfied with myself if I bequeathed this Government in a state of embarrassment to my successor, as long as there is any hope that by remaining at my post I can render any service to her Majesty, or promote the good order and welfare of the colony. I do not, therefore, entertain any intention of resigning my charge whilst your lordship is of opinion that I can be useful here. The time, however, may come, when, owing to the state of parties, and the personal feelings regarding myself by which some of them are instigated, the formation of an administration, supported by a majority in the Legislature, might rather be facilitated than impeded by my departure. If that case should occur, I shall not hesitate to report its existence to your lordship; and although I should grieve to transfer my trust to a successor under such unsatisfactory circumstances, I should derive some consolation from the reflection that I had not abandoned my station as long as I could retain it with any good effect."

In June, he wrote to Mr. Martin, giving a sad account of his state:

"I have no hope of benefit from anything. The malady is gradually getting worse, although its progress from day to day is

imperceptible. I cannot quit my post at present without the certainty of mischievous consequences, and must therefore perform my duty by remaining where I am, whatever may be the result to myself personally.

"I dare not use the remaining eye for reading or writing, and it will not bear any light.

"In my room I am obliged to sit sheltered by screens, and when I go out, which I only do to attend business in town, I take every precaution in my power against the glare and dust. I do not undervalue the use of the eye that remains to me, for to see at all is precious, and is perfect bliss compared with utter blindness; but freedom from the latter is all that I can boast of in my organs of sight, and I see no prospect of amendment. This is a sorry account of myself, but it is the most flattering that I can give."

In his darkened room or his sheltered carriage Lord Metcalfe was still the Governor-General; and whatever might be the infirmities of his body, the strength of his mind was unimpaired. The confidential despatches which he dictated in the spring and summer of 1845 are unsurpassed in clearness and in vigour, both of thought and diction, by any that he ever wrote in his best days of bodily ease.

Those despatches, relating to the state of parties in the Assembly and in the province at large, made a strong impression on Lord Stanley's mind;* and he was more than ever convinced of the embarrassments which would attend Metcalfe's departure, in such a conjuncture, from the distracted province. In his letters to the Colonial Secretary, the latter had understand the extent of his sufferings,† and it is probable that Lord Stanley, seeing

* These despatches have been quoted in the preceding chapter.

† The same tendency to make light of his sufferings is apparent in his private letters. In one now before me, he says: "A life of perpetual chloride of zinc is far from an easy one. There are, however, greater pains and afflictions in this world, and I ought to be grateful for the many mercies that I have experienced." In a postscript he adds: "The doctor has just been with me, and

no diminution of mental vigour apparent in the Governor-General's despatches, had for some time no clear conception either of the extent of Metcalfe's sufferings, or the progress of his physical decay. But still, knowing that his sufferings must be great, the Colonial Secretary wrote that, strongly impressed as he was with the conviction that the Governor-General's continuance at his post was of the highest importance to the public interests, he could not persuade the suffering man, under such circumstances, to delay his departure. He left the question, therefore, in Metcalfe's hands—writing to him, at the same time, to point out how he believed that, to some extent, the difficulties of his position might be diminished. The letter is, in many respects, an important one. It is to be remembered that the undeviating support of the Assembly was hardly to be looked for; and that Metcalfe had begun wisely to consider whether the Ministry might not sometimes sustain a defeat without incurring the necessity of resigning:

LORD STANLEY TO LORD METCALFE.

"*Downing-street, June* 18, 1845.

"My dear Lord,—Your confidential despatches, Nos. 52 and 54, the latter of which reached me on the 14th instant, touch upon subjects of the greatest interest, as bearing upon the future prospects of Canada. I sincerely deplore the report which you send me in No. 52 of your own state of health, and highly appreciate the honourable feeling which in such circumstances leads you to express a reluctance to be relieved whilst affairs are still unsettled. I do not attempt to conceal from you the importance, in a public point of view, which I attach to your continuance in Canada at the present moment, or the extent to which I think the difficulties of the province would be aggravated by any change in the Executive there; but whilst I say this most sincerely, I

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says that the face looks very satisfactory.—N.B. I can't shut my right eye, and, after the next application, shall not be able to open my mouth. Very satisfactory!"

must say with equal sincerity that I should consider myself most culpable were I to accept of the continuance of your services at increased risk to your health; and I must, therefore, leave the question altogether in your hands, only giving you an instruction opposite to that which I should think necessary for many men, not to permit public considerations unduly to overweigh the consideration which you owe to yourself. I venture to hope, however, that as your general health is not impaired, and the climate is not unhealthy, moderate employment would be even more beneficial, as well as more agreeable, than a life of constrained inactivity in this country.

"Your very clear statement of the condition of parties in Canada makes very evident the embarrassment to which every vacancy must expose you, and the serious difficulty which, under any circumstance, must attend the administration of the Government on the principles laid down by Lord Sydenham. I should, however, content myself with the acknowledgment of your despatches, concurring as I do entirely in the views which you take of the course to be pursued, and quite satisfied of the judgment with which you will act upon them, were I not anxious to disclaim, in the strongest terms, as being consonant to English practice of the constitution, the doctrine that a Government defeated upon a single question must necessarily resign office. So far is this from being the case, that hardly a session passes in which the Government, if not actually defeated by a vote in the House, is not compelled to avoid defeat by suffering measures to drop which have been introduced by them as a Government. I will only mention one instance among a hundred similar, which might be adduced. In the session before last, a bill was introduced for altering the whole ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the country. It passed a second reading, but it was so manifest that of those who supported it a great majority considered some of its leading provisions highly objectionable, it was not attempted to carry it any further. Last year, another bill on the same subject, but omitting several of the provisions to which the greatest objection had been taken, was introduced, but was equally unsuccessful; and in the present session a bill, almost similar to the first, has been introduced in the House of Lords by Lord Cottenham, has passed almost without a dissentient voice, and will, just as certainly, never pass the House of Commons. I might mention many other instances; but the principle in this country is so perfectly understood, that no single measure can produce the

necessary resignation of the Government. Some one measure may, indeed, be considered of such paramount importance, and so connected with the whole scheme of administration, that the Government may either stake their existence upon it, or feel it due to their character not to sustain defeat upon it; but these are the rare exceptions and not the general rule; and in general a Government does not think itself justified in staking its existence on a single measure, nor fall until lowered in public estimation, or at least in public confidence, by a succession of defeats or failures. And if this be the case in England, much more is it necessary that it should be so in Canada, where the union and consolidation of parties is less distinct, and where the bonds which unite public men together are so much more feeble. In such a state of public affairs, open questions ought to be much more freely permitted. When difference of opinion exists in the Executive Council, every sacrifice short of the sacrifice of personal honour should be made by the members, for the purpose of securing public co-operation; and when they are united in opinion, no defeat should induce them to surrender their offices, which are a public trust, unless they are satisfied that it has become impossible for them to carry on the Government, and that there is a reasonable prospect of its being carried on by others, consistently with the obligations binding on the colony towards the Crown."

"Though this is a private despatch, I have no objection to your acquainting the individual members of your Council, should you see fit, what are my views, which I am sure are the views of every man connected with public life, who looks to the permanent welfare of his country. Above all, you will not fail to impress upon your Council, though such a suggestion would hardly come with propriety from me, the extreme risk which would attend any disruption of the present Conservative party of Canada. Their own steadiness, and your firmness and discretion, have gone far towards consolidating them as a party, and securing a stable administration of the colony; and it would be most lamentable if, at a time when it is in the enjoyment of the highest prosperity, and when there is every appearance of the permanence of that prosperity, when no reasonable cause for dissatisfaction exists, dissensions on minor points between those who are labouring in common for the general good, should again endanger the loss of these great advantages, and give an opening for renewed excitement and confusion; and probably for the temporary ad-

mission to power men the most unscrupulous in its exercise, and quite ready to sacrifice all national, and above all, all British interests to their own personal and selfish objects.

"I trust that such a result may be averted by your own prudence, and by the good sense of those who are acting under you. If the present administration should be broken up by internal dissensions, I should, indeed, augur ill for the welfare of Canada, and for its long continuance as a British colony.

"Believe me, my dear Lord,

"Yours very faithfully,

"STANLEY."

As the year wore on, the ravages of the disease which was destroying by inches the brave-hearted Governor-General, became more and more frightful; and he began to think that, let his resolution be what it might, and let the clearness of his intellect remain as unclouded as ever, it must soon become physically impossible for him to administer successfully the affairs of the Government. With these doubts besetting him, he addressed, in the autumn, the following letter to Lord Stanley:—

"*Montreal, October* 13, 1845.

"MY LORD,—My disorder has recently made a serious advance, affecting my articulation and all the functions of the mouth; there is a hole through the cheek into the interior of the mouth. My doctors warn me that it may soon be physically impossible for me to perform the duties of my office. If the season were not so far advanced towards the winter, I should feel myself under the necessity of requesting your lordship to relieve me; but as such an arrangement might require time and deliberation, I propose to struggle on as well as I can, and will address your lordship again on this subject according to any further changes that may occur in my condition; in the meanwhile, I have considered it to be my duty to apprise your lordship of the probable impossibility of my performing my official functions, in order that you may be prepared to make such an arrangement as may seem to be most expedient for the public service.

"I have the honour to be, &c., &c.,

"METCALFE."

A fortnight afterwards he wrote again, still on the same distressing subject:—

"*October* 24, 1845.

"My Lord,—I continue in the same bodily state that I described by the last mail. I am unable to entertain company or to receive visitors; and my official business with public functionaries is transacted at my residence in the country instead of the apartment assigned for that purpose in the public buildings in town. I am consequently conscious that I am inadequately performing the duties of my office, and if there were time to admit of my being relieved before the setting in of the winter, I should think that the period had arrived when I might, perfectly in consistence with public duty, solicit to be relieved; but, as the doctors say that I cannot be removed with safety from this place during the winter, and as that season is fast approaching, it becomes a question whether I can best perform my duty to my country by working on at the head of the Government to the best of my ability until the spring, or by delivering over charge to other hands, and remaining here as a private individual until the season may admit of my return to Europe with safety. In this dilemma I have hitherto abstained from submitting my formal resignation of my office; and shall continue to report by each successive mail as to my condition and capability of carrying on the duties of my post.

"I have the honour to be, &c.,

"Metcalfe."

Before this last letter had reached England, Lord Stanley had replied to the preceding one, both on his own part and on the part of the Queen; generously and considerately accepting Metcalfe's resignation, with every demonstration of regret, and with a full and hearty recognition of the services he had rendered to the State—an unqualified expression, indeed, of the approbation which the Government had accorded to his conduct throughout all the struggles of his colonial administration:

LORD STANLEY TO LORD METCALFE.

"*Downing-street, November* 2, 1845.

"My dear Lord,—I have received with the deepest regret your private letter of the 13th ultimo, which gives me too much

cause to fear that the progress, which I lament to see that your disorder has made, may very shortly make it physically impossible for you longer to discharge your arduous duties; and I cannot sufficiently express my admiration of the heroic constancy and self-devotion with which, in the midst of such severe sufferings, you have given yourself up to the public service. But I feel that I ought not to be in any degree instrumental to the possible sacrifice of a life so valuable as yours, even to the interests of the Crown, which you have so ably, so zealously, and so nobly sustained. I need hardly say, that your administration of affairs in Canada has more than realised the most sanguine expectations which I had ventured to form of it; and you will retire from it, whenever you retire, with the entire approval and the admiration of her Majesty's Government; and, I may venture to add, of the Queen herself.

"In order to leave you perfectly free to hand over the Government at any moment when you may feel it right or necessary to do so, even although the state of your health, or the weather, or both combined, should induce you to remain in the colony after divesting yourself of authority, I enclose you an official letter, *accepting your resignation*, which you will understand me as authorizing you to make use of or not, as and when you may see fit.

"Lord Cathcart will, of course, take upon him the provisional administration of the Government whenever you make it over to him. I shall endeavour to replace you as soon as practicable after I shall know your final decision, but it will be a task of great difficulty to do so at all; and to do so adequately I am aware is impossible.

I have the honour to be, my dear Lord,

"With the sincerest regard and esteem,

"Yours most faithfully,

"STANLEY."

LORD STANLEY TO LORD METCALFE.

"*Downing-street, November* 3, 1845.

"MY LORD,—I have received the Queen's commands to express to your lordship the deep concern with which her Majesty learns that the state of your health is such as to render it necessary for you to tender to her Majesty the resignation of the high and arduous office the duties of which you have so ably fulfilled. Her Majesty is aware that your devotion to her service has led you,

amidst physical sufferings beneath which ordinary men would have given way to remain at your post to the last possible moment. The Queen highly estimates this proof of your public spirit; and in accepting your proffered resignation, which, in the present circumstances she feels it impossible to decline, her Majesty has commanded me to express her entire approval of the ability and prudence with which you have conducted the affairs of a very difficult Government, her sense of the loss which the public service is about to sustain by your retirement, and her deep regret for the cause which renders it unavoidable. These sentiments, I assure you, are fully participated in by myself and the other members of her Majesty's Government.

"I shall take early steps for the selection of your permanent successor, though it is probable that some time must elapse before he may be able to relieve you. In the meantime, you will consider the acceptance of your resignation as taking effect from the period, whenever that may be, at which you see fit to hand over the government provisionally to Earl Cathcart.

"I have the honour to be, my lord,

"Your lordship's most obedient, humble servant,

"STANLEY."

The time had now come at which Metcalfe, even with his high and predominant sense of the claims of the public service, might have consented, without a feeling of self-reproach, without a single struggle of any kind, to lay down the reins of office. But he could not. The claims of self were still reluctantly to be admitted. Even after the receipt of these letters, he could not at once determine to depart

Still the thought uppermost in his mind was whether he could do any good by remaining at his post. His unvarying language had been, "I am tied to Canada by my duty." This was not only a devoted sense of duty to the Crown, but a generous sense of duty to those loyal subjects who, throughout the great struggle in which he had been engaged, had manfully and consistently supported him. He felt that, in leaving Canada, he would be leaving them to their fate—withdrawing from them their main defence

and protection, and abandoning them to be torn to pieces by their enemies. He could hardly bring himself to believe, in this early winter of 1845, that since the prorogation of Parliament any very important reaction in favour of Government had set in throughout the colony. There were those, however, who thought that they could discern such favourable symptoms. At the close of the summer there had been two county elections, which had been carried in favour of Government. Mr. Viger, who had before been beaten, in the general election, was now returned for the Three-Rivers county; and Mr. Tuscherau, who had been appointed Solicitor-General for Lower Canada, was returned, without opposition, for Dorchester, a county containing one of the most numerous French-Canadian constituencies in the colony. In neither case had an Opposition candidate been brought forward by the opponents of the Ministry; a fact which, in the minds of some people, indicated a favourable reaction.* But Metcalfe could not bring himself to think that it betokened anything more than a growing weariness of opposition, which might in time produce favourable results. "The issue of the next session," he wrote, "will still depend on the members of the Conservative party, several of whom have expressed want of confidence in some of the members of the Executive Council; and if they allow personal dislike or disappointment in their own expectations to carry them into opposition, the consequences may be exceedingly

* "An idea," wrote Metcalfe in September, "prevails that a reaction has begun to operate in the minds of the French-Canadian population, and that the influence of the Opposition leader has diminished. . . . . I wish that I could state with any confidence that I see cause to place much reliance on this opinion. The only change that I believe to have taken place is that the French-Canadian party are beginning to be tired of being in a minority, and to doubt the policy of following a leader who keeps them in groundless opposition to the Government."

mischievous." And the more these considerations suggested themselves to Metcalfe, the more reluctant he grew to quit the position which enabled him to preserve the union and the stability of the party, who had fought and triumphed by his side, but who, disunited and without him, must fall easily before their opponents.

But life was dying—dying no less surely for the strong will that sustained him, and the vigorous intellect which glowed in his shattered frame. A little while and he might die at his post. The winter was setting in; the navigation was closing. It was necessary at once to decide whether Metcalfe should now prepare to betake the suffering remnant of himself to England, or to abide at Montreal, if spared, till the coming spring. But he would not trust himself to form the decision. He invited the leading members of his Council to attend him at Monklands;* and there he told them that he left the issue in their hands. It was a scene never to be forgotten by any who were present in the Governor-General's sheltered room on that memorable occasion. Some were dissolved in tears. All were agitated by a strong emotion of sorrow and sympathy, mingled with a sort of wondering admiration of the heroic constancy of their chief. He told them, that if they desired his continuance at the head of the Government—if they believed that the cause for which they had fought together so manfully would suffer by his departure, and that they therefore counselled him to remain at his post, he would willingly abide by their decision; but that the Queen had graciously signified her willingness that he should be relieved and that he doubted much whether the adequate performance of his duties, as the chief ruler of so extensive and important a province, had not almost ceased to be a physical possibility. It need not be said

* This was the country-house in which he lived since the change of the seat of Government, a few miles from Montreal.

what was their decision. They besought him to depart; and he consented. A nobler spectacle than that of this agonised man resolutely offering to die at his post; the world has seen only once before.

He embarked for England—quietly and unostentatiously, as his suffering state compelled; but not without many indications, upon his part, that no suffering could make him forgetful of others, or dull the generosity of his nature, the active kindliness of his heart. He went—and if a great chorus of gratitude and praise, swollen by the voices of his countrymen in all parts of the colony, did not burst upon him as he departed from among them, his administration of the Canadian provinces is not the less to be regarded as a great success. He could not complete his work. The Almighty Providence, which had so afflicted him, forbade that he should do more; but he had done what, perhaps, no other man, under similar circumstances, would have effected. He went to Canada at what may be called the turning point of the career of the colony. A little too much concession, or a little too much resistance to the inevitable progress of Liberalism, would have severed the Canadian provinces from the British Empire. It was not Metcalfe's duty to consider whether the colony were ripe for independence, or whether such independence would advantageously or injuriously affect the interests of the parent state; but it was his duty, as the representative of the Crown, to maintain the existing connection, to support the presumed interests of the empire, and to encourage and protect the more loyal portion of the colonial community. In attempting this, he was brought into antagonism with what may be called the popular or democratic party. Metcalfe was called a popularity-seeker; but here, although he aimed at accomplishing what he believed would eventually produce the greatest good of the greatest number, the immediate effect of his measures was to embroil him,

if not with the people, at least with the dispensers of popularity. In Canada as in Jamaica, he had been guided and sustained by the same prevailing sense of duty. And he had endeavoured, by the same means, to bring about the same ends. He had endeavoured to do justice to all men without distinction of political party or religious creed. He had endeavoured to reconcile all parties to each other, and to cement their attachment to the Crown. But the bitterness of contending factions rendered the work of conciliation difficult; and, with the strongest desire to possess himself in peace with all, he found that he must either be at war with the most powerful and active party in the colony, or become a traitor to the Crown. These hostile circumstances brought into action, and displayed to full advantage, a quality which he possessed in very rare perfection, and which he would exercise, under strong compulsion, at any sacrifice of self. His mildness and gentleness were so conspicuous, both in public and private life, that it is probable his Canadian opponents did not suspect the existence of that indomitable resolution which they forced him to display. But it was by this resolution, not shutting out conciliatory measures when it was possible to resort to them with effect, that he stemmed the tide of usurpation which, but for the resistance he opposed to it, would utterly have destroyed the bonds which united the Canadian provinces to the mother country. For the full development of his policy he trusted to the operation of time. But the great affliction which struck him down in the midst of his career of usefulness, compelled him to leave incomplete that which he would have completed, had not the Almighty, for his own wise ends, laid an arresting hand upon the arm of His faithful servant.

CHAPTER XVI.

[1845—1846.]

THE END.

Metcalfe's Return to England—Residence in Mansfield-street—Progress of his Malady—The Oriental Club Address—Removal to Malshanger—Addresses from Canada and India—His last Days—Death—Character of Charles Metcalfe.

THE story of Charles Metcalfe's life is now nearly told. On the 16th of December, 1845, he again found himself on English soil. He arrived in great suffering. Death had by this time become to him merely "a question of time." It was obvious to the eminent professional gentlemen who were called in to his aid, that curative surgery could do nothing for him—conservative surgery little.

He was conveyed at first to his old resting-place—Mivart's Hotel. But a private residence was presently secured for him in Mansfield-street. It was expedient that he should remain in London, in order that he might have such benefit as the best surgical skill and medical advice in the country could afford. He was frequently visited by Sir Benjamin Brodie and Mr. Liston. Mr. Martin and Mr. Pollock were in daily attendance.

He was conscious that nothing could check the ravages of the frightful disease that was destroying him. He had ceased even to entertain a hope that it would be permitted to him to take his seat in the House of Lords. The Garter King-of-Arms wrote to him with a formula of the prescribed ceremony. And Court robe-makers sought his Lordship's patronage. But he smiled sorrowfully as he

thought now that the dreams of his ambitious youth had been realised, and the doors of Parliament thrown wide open to him, that he would never be suffered to cross the threshold.

He was never free from acute pain except when under the influence of strong narcotics. But his patience and fortitude under this continual affliction were something beautiful to contemplate. He never uttered a word of complaint. Excepting in an increased gravity of manner, there was nothing to indicate the extreme suffering he endured. All his old tenderness—his consideration for others—his pure unselfishness—still beautified his daily life. It was a privilege to attend upon one so grateful for small kindnesses, so unwilling to give trouble, so resigned under every dispensation. There were many on whom the spectacle of Metcalfe's heroic endurance had a grand and an abiding moral effect. Some of his oldest friends wrote to him, that if it should ever please God so to visit them, the lesson which he had taught them would not be thrown away.

He never betook himself to the sick-room, but, as far as his infirmities would allow him, went about his daily avocations, or rather lived his habitual life, with little outward alteration. He received visits from his friends. He dictated letters. He took an interest in what was read to him. He seldom missed his accustomed drive in the Park. Many remember his closed carriage, and the glimpses which they caught of the poor bandaged face within it.

The expressions of sympathy, which came to him from all quarters, and in all possible shapes, must have touched the very core of his heart. One particular manifestation of the general commiseration which his sufferings excited, is worthy of notice. He was continually receiving letters, some from friends and some from strangers, suggesting different remedies which had been tried with success in

cases similar to his own. One correspondent recommended mesmerism, which had cured Miss Martineau; another, hydropathy, at the "pure springs of Malvern;" a third an application of the common dock-leaf; a fourth, an infusion of couch-grass; a fifth, the baths of Docherte, near Vienna; a sixth, the volcanic hot springs of Karlsbad; a seventh, a wonderful plaster made of rose-leaves, olive oil, and turnip-juice; an eighth, a plaster and powder in which some part of a young frog was a principal ingredient; a ninth, a mixture of copperas and vinegar; a tenth, an application of pure ox-gall; an eleventh, a mixture of Florence oil and red precipitate; whilst a twelfth was certain of the good effects of homœopathy, which had cured the well-known "Charlotte Elizabeth." Besides these varied remedies, many men and women, with infallible recipes, or certain modes of treatment, were recommended to him, by themselves and others. Learned Italian professors, mysterious American women, erudite Germans, and obscure Irish quacks — all had cured cancers of twenty years' standing, and all were pressing, or pressed forward to operate on Lord Metcalfe.

Though self-interest may in some instances have been at work in these recommendations, it is not to be doubted that they evinced a large amount of genuine sympathy. To all of these suggestions, however, Metcalfe was gratefully indifferent. He directed his thanks to be returned, when his communicants were not anonymous; but he steadfastly abided by the regular practitioners who attended him. He felt that it was beyond human skill to do more than alleviate his sufferings, and that if God would work a miracle in his behalf, he would employ one agent as readily as another.

And whilst some were thus manifesting the sympathy with which they regarded him, others were endeavouring to excite his sympathy for them. He was always beset

with applications for charity. The voice of suffering was continually clamouring at his doors. During the former periods of his residence in England, the fame of his generosity had gone forth into all parts of the country; and many doubtless thought that they could impose upon his tenderness of heart. Some approached him with direct appeals, in the earnest language of despair; others endeavoured to stimulate his interest by framing their petitions in language of mysterious suggestiveness. More than one wrote, that having heard of his arrival, they had risen from a sick-bed, and crawled to his door. A constant succession of these appeals had ever been the condition of his residence in London. He gave largely—generously; but not indiscriminately. He instituted inquiries into the cases brought before him; and when there was any obscurity, he gave the petitioner the benefit of the doubt.

If the sympathy and admiration of his friends—if private affection and public honour could have mitigated his sufferings at this time, he would have found consolation and relief. And, doubtless, there were circumstances which, from time to time, shot gleams of sunshine across the darkened path of the dying man. Expressions of the profoundest respect and admiration followed him both from the Eastern and Western worlds. But there was nothing, perhaps, which gratified him more than a public demonstration of sympathy, the scene of which was within a mile of his own doors. On the 12th of January, at the Oriental Club, in Hanover-square, might have been seen gathered together all the men of any note, connected with Indian affairs, whom London and the neighbourhood contained—eager to do honour to Lord Metcalfe; eager to manifest how much they loved him, how much they admired him, and how proud they were of his fame. They were gathered together to cast, what, if I rightly remember,

Sir James Weir Hogg feelingly described, as "a wreath upon his bier." At this meeting Lord Auckland presided, and was the first to sign the following address:

"We, the undersigned civil and military servants of the East India Company, and others personally connected with India, beg permission to offer to your lordship the tribute of our affectionate attachment and sympathy, and to tender to you the expression of that admiration of your public character which we share with every class of her Majesty's subjects.

"Long and intimately related to India, we have had peculiar opportunities of appreciating the merits of your services there; we have watched with no ordinary interest the career of honour and of usefulness which, since you left that country, you have pursued in the government of two of the most important colonial possessions of the British Crown; and we have gloried in the honour conferred on you by your Sovereign, as triumph won for the body to which we in common belong.

"We had hoped, that after you had accomplished the difficult and important objects of your mission to Canada, we should have seen you return to take your well-merited place among the hereditary legislators of your native country; assured that you would in that august assembly have sustained the true interests of the empire with the same great knowledge, firmness, and wisdom, as had marked your administration in that splendid province. And we anxiously anticipated the opportunity of joining with our fellow-subjects there and at home in congratulating you on the happy termination of your arduous duties, and in tendering to you that tribute of public gratitude and applause which justly belongs to those who have so merited of their country.

"It has not pleased Divine Providence to permit the entire fulfilment of our affectionate anticipations. But you have achieved distinctions which call for our warmest congratulations; you have gathered a large measure of glory for yourself, and, what is far dearer to you, you have secured to your country many important advantages, with a prospect that your labour will yield a still richer harvest at no distant period. And the very circumstance which has compelled you to retire prematurely from public life has enabled you to display such heroic firmness and devotion to the public weal, and such trial of moral strength over physical evil, as have more than sustained the lofty estimate we had formed of your character, and have justly placed your name in the rank

of those patriots who were ever prepared cheerfully to suffer or die for their native land.

"Our fervent prayer is, that you may yet be spared for a lengthened course of future usefulness. But to whatever issue it may please God to lead the trial with which he has seen fit to visit you, we trust that this public expression of sympathy, affection, and admiration, will not be deemed misplaced; it is soothing to our own feelings to be allowed to offer it; it cannot, we hope, be unacceptable to you, and humble though it be, it will not, we trust, be wholly lost to those whom your example will stimulate in the path of public virtue."

To this address almost every distinguished man in England connected with Indian affairs—men who had been Governors-General of India, Governors of the minor Presidencies, Members of Council, Chief Justices, Commanders-in-Chief, with many Directors of the Company, and other men of note, were eager to subscribe their names. The parchment on which they were inscribed could scarcely be spread out in his room when it was presented to him by Lord Auckland. He received it with deep emotion. "It is easy," he said, with reference to this address, "to bear up against ill-usage, but such kindness as this quite overpowers me." When his sister said, playfully, "See what a great man you are, that they must follow you with their admiration even to your sick chamber," he replied, "Yes, dearest Georgiana—and yet what should I be now, if I had not always felt that eternity was the only thing worth living for?"

To the address, which had so moved Lord Metcalfe, he returned the following reply:

"2 *Mansfield-street, February* 3, 1846.

"TO THE SUBSCRIBERS TO THE ADDRESS OF THE CIVIL AND MILITARY SERVANTS OF THE EAST INDIA COMPANY, AND OTHERS PERSONALLY CONNECTED WITH INDIA.

"MY LORDS AND SIRS,—Often as similar declarations have been made, none can ever have been made with greater truth than that with which I now assure you that language is inadequate to

express the feelings inspired by the honour which you have conferred on me.

"It is peculiarly dear to me, as coming from a numerous body who have either witnessed or taken an interest in my endeavours to serve my country in various capacities. Among them are some under whom I have had the honour of serving; some whose public services I have had the honour of superintending; some with whom I have co-operated as colleagues; some who, as schoolfellows, have known me from boyhood; some who, as contemporaries, have been engaged in the same field; some who hold the highest positions connected with India; and many who, without my personal acquaintance, have nevertheless concurred to do me honour; the whole proceeding exhibiting an accumulation of condescension, affection, kindness, and generosity, for which no words can convey a due sense of the feelings of respect and gratitude and heartfelt emotion by which I am almost overwhelmed.

"Such an honour far surpasses any estimate that I can entertain of my humble pretensions; but although I am conscious that it is chiefly owing to kindness and affection, nevertheless to be the object of such feelings I must ever regard as one of the highest honours that the world can afford.

"Had I retired from the colonial services of my country with health to enable me to discharge other public functions, it would have been the highest satisfaction to me to devote the rest of my life to those duties in the Legislature devolving on the rank to which I have been elevated by our most gracious Sovereign; but as it appears to be the will of the Almighty that sickness and infirmity should be the lot of my remaining days. I shall in that state cherish the recollection of your kindness as one of the greatest blessings I can enjoy.

"Proud of my relation with the services in India, in which so many eminent men have been formed and are continually rising, it is a source of indescribable pleasure to me that the approbation accorded to my efforts in other quarters should meet with sympathy from those personally connected with that splendid portion of the British Empire, and that one of the last acts of my public life should be to convey to you my grateful sense of the generous sentiments which you entertain.

"METCALFE."

Other addresses, as I have said, came to him from a distance—some from the great North-American colony

which he had recently quitted. I will speak of all these things at once, anticipating the time of their receipt, that I need not again be compelled to recur to public affairs. He had quitted Canada so suddenly, that the people had not enjoyed the opportunity of presenting him with any farewell addresses. But some admiring communities sent tokens of respect across the seas after their late Governor-General. The language of these addresses was that of affectionate admiration. One example will suffice. It is from the address of the Western District. After stating that Lord Metcalfe's sudden and unexpected departure had prevented them, and they believed the people of Canada generally, from offering their sincere and disinterested testimonials of reverence and regard, the subscribers of the address proceeded to say:

"After more than five-and-forty years of arduous and eminent services in various and distant portions of the British Empire—services to which future ages will do ample justice, and which will ever adorn the page of history, your lordship has been graciously permitted by your sovereign to retire into private life. Much as we lament that retirement, we cannot but admire her Majesty's consideration towards your lordship personally in acquiescing in your lordship's desire that she should receive back the important trust which she had confided to your keeping. Your lordship carries with you our reverence, our gratitude, and our affectionate esteem. We revere your talents as a statesman and a governor—we are grateful for the benefits which the country has reaped from your lordship's liberal and enlightened policy, and from your upright, firm, and impartial administration of the affairs of Canada; and we regard, with an affection towards your lordship personally which it is difficult to find language to describe, your patient consideration, your kindness, and your unbounded generosity towards all who rightly sought your lordship's favour and assistance. These are our undisguised sentiments, uncontrolled by selfish or by interested motives. We now bid your lordship *farewell!* and as long as memory remains, so long will your lordship's name, and fame, and virtues live in our affections, and be cherished by our posterity."

The private letters, too, which Metcalfe received from Canada at this time, stated that the members of his old Executive Council had shown a strong disposition to do him justice at last. One correspondent wrote: "Your late Council, and others opposed to your lordship's government, now speak of you in the highest possible terms; and your lordship will be surprised when I tell you that Aylwin expressed himself at a public meeting the other evening in such terms as were most grateful to all, who, like myself, honour and revere your lordship." Metcalfe had never doubted that though his days were numbered, he would live down the obloquy which attached to his name in the minds of the more violent section of the French-Canadian party.

There is one more token of the grateful attachment with which Charles Metcalfe was regarded in those distant countries he had so long benefited by his wisdom and benevolence, of which I would speak; a fitting close to the long series of honourable testimonials of public respect and affection of which, perhaps, no man in any generation ever received so many. The Metcalfe Hall, in Calcutta, which had been built by public subscription to commemorate his Indian Government, and especially the great act of the liberation of the Press, being now complete; and Metcalfe's bust having been placed in it, a meeting was held for the purpose of voting an address to his lordship on the occasion of the ceremony; and the following was adopted by the community of Calcutta:

"TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE LORD METCALFE, G.C.B., &c., &c.

"The completion of an edifice in this city bearing your lordship's name, and erected in honour of your virtues and of your public services in India, and the placing therein of your lordship's bust, are events which we would fain celebrate by renewing those expressions of attachment and respect which we addressed to you when we joined in the design of a building—to become a memo-

rial of our high estimation of your character, to bear the name of 'The Metcalfe Hall,' and to contain the chambers appropriated to the reception of our public library, and to the sittings and proceedings of the Agricultural Society of India.

"You are eminently endeared to India by a career of conspicuous virtues and public services, which penetrated all classes of the community with admiration and esteem.

"Their experience of your talents for public administration in an empire of such diversified interests as the British Empire of India; of your wisdom and fortitude, and liberality of mind; of the munificence and kindness of your disposition; of the courteousness of your intercourse with all ranks of society; prepared them for the signal successes which were achieved by you over the social distractions which existed in Jamaica, and the difficult contentions which had beset the Government of British America, when you were successively summoned from your projected retirement, by the discrimination of her Majesty's Government, to new spheres of most arduous as well as most honourable employment in those colonies.

"We cordially congratulate your lordship on the improvement in the happiness and prosperity of those colonies which has attended your able and patriotic discharge of the trusts reposed in you; and on the dignity which has been conferred on you by our gracious Sovereign, in approbation of your services to her Majesty's Crown.

"We have read with affectionate satisfaction and sympathy the sentiments expressed towards you in London, on your return from Canada, by the civil and military servants of the East India Company and others, noblemen and gentlemen personally connected with India, and we echo from the city of Calcutta the just tribute to your great virtues presented to you in their address.

"We beg to assure you that we cherish towards you a profound regard; that you will ever dwell in our grateful remembrances; and that we join in sincere prayers to Almighty God for the restoration of your health, and that you may long live to enjoy the approbation and gratitude of your country."

The address was sent home, and a committee, of which Lord Auckland was the head,* was entrusted with the

* The members were Sir E. Ryan, Holt Mackenzie, Mountstuart Elphinstone, General Galloway, General Duncan Macleod, W. B. Bayley, H. T. Prinsep, J. S. Brownrigg, and Dwarkanauth Tagore.

duty of presenting it to Lord Metcalfe. Anything like the ceremony of a deputation was impossible. So the address was forwarded to the dying man, with the following sympathising note:

LORD AUCKLAND TO LORD METCALFE.

"*London, July* 4, 1845.

"My Lord,—The accompanying address was voted by the inhabitants of Calcutta, and transmitted to me and to the gentlemen whose names are appended to this note, for the purpose of being laid before your lordship. We will not propose to intrude upon your lordship, now suffering unhappily from severe illness, but we have a melancholy satisfaction in sending the address, and in assuring your lordship that from our hearts we participate in the feelings of sympathy and of affectionate respect by which it has been dictated.

"I am, with strong feelings of regard, your lordship's most faithful servant,

"AUCKLAND."

To this letter, and to the address, Lord Metcalfe returned these touching replies:

"*Malshanger, Basingstoke, July*, 10, 1846.

"TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE EARL OF AUCKLAND G.C.B., &c. &c. &c.

"My Lord,—In my condition of infirmity and depression I cannot do more than acknowledge your Lordship's letter, and express my utter hopelessness of doing justice to the goodness which on this and every other occasion I have had the honour of receiving from you.

"I beg to convey to the gentlemen associated with your lordship my heartfelt thanks for their kindness, and for the consideration which has induced the mode adopted of transmitting the communication from Calcutta.

"I have the honour to be, with great respect, your lordship's most faithful servant,

"METCALFE."

"*Malshanger, Basingstoke, July* 10, 1846.

TO THE INHABITANTS OF CALCUTTA.

"Sirs,—Scarcely possible as it would have been under any circumstances to convey to you, in adequate terms, my sense of

the generosity of the communication which I have received from you, on the occasion of the opening of the public building with which the inhabitants of Calcutta have done me the honour to connect my name, the difficulty is increased by the infirmities which beset me, and the hopeless state of my health. I must therefore confine myself to the expression of the fervent thanks of a grateful heart, which is fully sensible of your kindness, and of the honour conferred on me by the association of my name with the edifice appropriated to the several important public institutions and purposes to which the use of the Metcalfe Hall is devoted. My anxious hope that prosperity and every other blessing may attend you will accompany me to the grave which is open at my feet.

"METCALFE."

He had by this time quitted the metropolis. The science of the world could do nothing to arrest the progress of his disease, and little to mitigate his sufferings. A quiet country seat in the neighbourhood of Basingstoke had been taken for him; and thither, in the month of April, he retired to die.

But still he bore up manfully against the weight of his sufferings. He would not betake himself to the sick-room, or adopt the habits of a confirmed invalid. He was very regular in his hours. At nine o'clock every morning he was ready for family prayers. After breakfast, the newspaper, or some more substantial work, was read aloud to him; he dictated letters to his friends, and transacted any necessary business. At four o'clock he was always present at the dinner-table; and afterwards, as the days lengthened, he was generally driven out for an hour or two in a close carriage. In the evening it was his choicest pleasure to listen to music. The performances on the harp of his sister, Mrs. Smythe, who dwelt with him, and whose continued ministrations did much to soothe the anguish of his last days, were a solace to him ever gratefully acknowledged.

No bodily anguish or physical debility could diminish his habitual kindness and consideration for others. He would often at this time, though so weak that he could scarcely stand without support, rise from his seat to place the cover over his sister's harp, when her playing was at an end. Numerous other illustrations of the same tender regard for those around him might be cited in this place. He knew that his end was rapidly approaching, and, although the great change which was fast coming upon him was never absent from his own mind, he seemed unwilling to do or to suffer anything that would bring the sad truth painfully to the minds of others. He wished, therefore, that everything should go on in his household as though his place were not soon to be empty. As a proof of this, it may be mentioned that he directed numerous large cases of books to be unpacked, and had book-shelves run up to the very attic-windows, as though he had years of life before him. He would converse cheerfully on all passing topics, public and private; and his keen sense of humour was unclouded to the last.*

He seldom or never spoke of his sufferings, and when others alluded to them, he would generally say something about the many blessings he had enjoyed. "Thank you," he would reply, in acknowledgment of such expressions of sympathy; "but I have much to be thankful for. Hitherto, up to this event, I have enjoyed the blessing of uninterrupted health." The strongest expression, with reference to his sad state, which he was known to utter, was upon one occasion when some one said to him, "I hope your lordship has enjoyed your drive;" and he answered sadly, "Enjoyment is now no word for me."

* A friend writing to me regarding Lord Metcalfe's last days, states: "A month before his death I have seen him laugh as heartily at a joke in 'Punch' as the stoutest of us."

As his end approached more and more nearly, he thought much of his absent friends, and was anxious to present a few of the most cherished with some little parting token of his affection. To William Butterworth Bayley, who had worked with him nearly half-a-century before in Lord Wellesley's office, he gave his bust of that great man, dictating the following letter—one of the last he ever signed —to his old friend:

"*Mulshanger, Basingstoke, July* 31, 1846.

"MY DEAREST BAYLEY,—Have you any bust of Lord Wellesley? If not, I should like to make over one to you after my demise. Having been given to me by Lord Wellesley, it will on that account, I am sure, be more than doubly interesting to you.

"I trust that you, Mrs. Bayley, and all yours are in good health.

"I continue to make progress in a fatal direction. With my love to Mrs. Bayley, and all your family.

"I remain,

"Yours most affectionate and attached,

"METCALFE."

A few days before, he had dictated a letter to Mr. Fredrick Wells, who was then departing for India—never to return—presenting him with a dressing-case, which had belonged to his brother, Richard Wells, whose early death at Delhi Metcalfe had never ceased to deplore:*

"*Malshanger, Basingstoke, July* 21, 1846.

"MY DEAREST WELLS,—Heartfelt thanks for your affectionate farewell; may every blessing attend you and yours. I feel that I cannot be long for this world, I therefore beg your acceptance of an article which belonged to your dear brother Richard, and which I have cherished for the last twenty years, meaning to do so to the day of my death: it will be doubly interesting to you as a

* See Chapter II., page 47, in which the acuteness of Metcalfe's sorrow for the death of his friend is illustrated by some extracts from his private correspondence.

memento of one who enjoyed the happiness of your affection. Once more, God bless you! Till death, your warmly attached,

METCALFE."

To letters of inquiry from his old friends he sent prompt and kindly replies—growing more and more significant in their brevity as time advanced. "I continue," he said, in May, "getting worse and worse, according to my own apprehension, and frequently feel a sinking which seems like an approach to dissolution." In June, he said, "My malady continues to make progress, and general decay is perceptible." He had always a kind inquiry to make after some member of the family to which he wrote; and if there were any suffering there, he was sure not to forget the sufferer.

And as his consideration for others—his almost womanly tenderness was undiminished to the last—so also was that manly resolution, which was the distinguishing feature of the other half of his character. As the summer advanced, it was obvious that death was rapidly approaching. But, although he was compelled to forego first one privilege and then another, and even the carriage went away unused from his door, he would struggle against his increasing infirmity, and exhibit the same self-reliance as he had ever manifested in his best days of bodily vigour. One example of this will suffice. The dreadful progress of his disease having caused the bursting of a vein in his neck, the hæmorrhage was so alarming that Mr. Martin, who had continued to visit him, was summoned from London by electric telegraph. When this gentleman arrived at Malshanger, he found the patient in his usual sitting-room, greatly exhausted by loss of blood. The members of his family had been vainly endeavouring to persuade him to suffer himself to be carried up-stairs to his sleeping apartment. Against this he had resolutely protested; and

he now said to Martin, "I am glad you are come; for I feel rather faint from loss of blood. They wanted to carry me up-stairs, but to that I have strong objections—what do you say?" On ascertaining the state of Metcalfe's circulation, Mr. Martin stated his opinion that, with some little aid, the patient might be able to walk up to his bedroom. The decision seemed quite to revive him. "That's right," he said; "I thought you would say so. I would not allow them to carry me." He then sent for a bundle of walking-sticks, collected in different parts of the world, and taking one brought from Niagara, said to Martin, "You keep that." He then selected another, a bamboo, known in India as a Penang Lawyer, and grasping it firmly, said, "Now, with Martin on one side and the Penang Lawyer on the other, I think we shall make it out." Thus he went up-stairs to his chamber. And in spite of the increased faintness which the exertion occasioned, all rejoiced that the inclinations of the noble sufferer had not been thwarted.

He continued to feel an interest in public concerns to the last; and sometimes regretted that he could not take his seat in the House of Lords to vote in favour of Peel's Corn Bill. To Lord Radnor, who had sought his testimony regarding the effect of the measure on the Canadian community, he wrote the following—his last letter on state affairs:

"*Malshanger, Basingstoke, 28th May*, 1846.

"My Lord,—I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your lordship's letter of yesterday. I am, as your lordship has been informed, very anxious for the success of the Corn Bill, although I should have preferred it, had it included the immediate abolition of all duty on importations, having been of opinion, as long as I have been able to think on the subject, that taxing the food of the poor is a monstrous injustice. Had the state of my health permitted me to attend to my duty in the House of

Lords, I should have joined in supporting the bill with those who are of opinion that, notwithstanding its defects, every exertion ought to be made to enact it.

"My opinion on the Corn-law question is founded on a principle which appears to me to be irresistible, and is irrespective of its probable effect with regard to Canada, because I think that the interests of a part must yield to those of the whole of the empire. With respect to Canada, the effect, I conceive, will be doubtful. At first sight it would appear to be injurious, as it deprives Canada of the advantage of a monopoly; but Canada, I trust, will benefit like other countries from freedom of trade, and ultimately not be a loser.

"Incapacitated as I am from attending to my duty, I should think it presumptuous on my part to authorise any communication of my sentiments to the House of Lords; but I have no desire that they should be secret, and with that reservation I place them at your lordship's disposal.—With thankful acknowledgment of the kind sentiments expressed by your lordship towards me personally, I have the honour to be, your lordship's most faithful, humble servant,

"METCALFE."

Towards the close of the month of August, it became more and more obvious that dissolution was rapidly approaching. An irritative fever had set in; and they who loved him best could hardly desire that it should not prove fatal, when the alternative seemed to be a lingering death by the hideous process of extending ulceration. There were inward warnings which told him that his sufferings were now nearly at an end. Most of those whom he loved best were beneath his roof; but there was one absent—one whom, as death approached, he earnestly desired to see. This was Mary Higginson; then seven years old—the eldest daughter of the cherished friend and companion who had followed his fortunes all over the world. He had been tenderly attached to the child ever since her birth, and he now said to Captain Higginson, who was then at Malshanger, "I think the termination of

my sufferings must now be close at hand. I desire to see Mary before it comes. Hitherto, on her account, I have denied myself the gratification; but now go and fetch her to me!" Two days afterwards she came. The meeting quite overcame him. But he recovered his composure after a while, and the presence of the child seemed to comfort him. She remained at Malshanger for a week, spending much of her time in Metcalfe's room, and reading the Scriptures to him every day. At the end of that time he said to her father, "I cannot have many days now to live—you had better take Mary away, that the dear child may not remain to witness the event." Before Captain Higginson could return, the sufferings of the noble patient were at an end.

This child of seven years read God's blessed word to the dying statesman, and he received the glad tidings of salvation as a little child. He was a man, naturally, of a reserved disposition. He was not wont to talk much of things that lay very near to his heart. And he was pre-eminently of a nature so sincere and honest that he shrank from anything that might appear like an ostentation of religious feeling, the reality of which, in his self-questioning humility, he might have sometimes permitted himself to doubt. Of his habitual reverence and his gratitude to the Giver of all good gifts incidental proof has already been afforded. He lived in a continual state of thankfulness, which even the agonies of his latter days could not quench or diminish. But it is not thus that the faith of Charles Metcalfe is to be described. He had an abiding sense of the efficacy of the atonement. He rested all his hopes on the blood of the Lamb. They who were most about his person during the closing scenes of his life saw his spirit depart without a doubt of his acceptance. The power of searching the Scriptures for himself had

long been denied to him. But sisterly affection had supplied the want which his failing organs of sight had entailed upon him; and every day it had been Mrs. Smythe's privilege to read to him those passages of the Gospel which contain the blessed assurance of forgiveness through Christ. He listened to them hopefully; assented reverently to their truth; and, in the midst of all his great trials, derived from them unspeakable consolation.

He had received many letters, some from friends and some from strangers, descanting on the great doctrines of the Christian faith, and exhorting him to cast everything, all that the world can bestow or inflict upon the most honoured and the most suffering of its inmates, at the foot of the Cross. Among others, Daniel Wilson, the apostolic Bishop of Calcutta, who was then, after years of faithful service, recruiting his health in England, wrote him a letter full of brotherly love, setting forth the great truth so clearly, that all else appeared dulness and obscurity beside the light of his holy teaching. As the world faded away before the suffering man, such tokens of loving-kindness were precious to him, though the lessons they contained might not have been needed. He had long known the way; and if, as the grave opened to receive him, he was sometimes cheered by the thought of the hungry whom he had fed, the naked whom he had clothed, and the houseless whom he had sheltered, he did not on that account, as the great change approached, lean for support on his own merits.

On the 4th of September, Lord Metcalfe, for the first time, did not leave his sleeping apartment. The extreme debility of the sufferer forbade any exertion. There was little apparent change except in a disinclination to take the nourishment offered to him. On the following morning,

however, the change was very apparent. It was obvious that he was sinking fast. Unwilling to be removed to his bed; he sat for the greater part of the day in a chair, breathing with great difficulty. In the afternoon he sent for the members of his family, laid his hands upon their heads as they knelt beside him, and breathed the blessing which he could not utter. Soon afterwards he was conveyed to his bed. For the first time for years he seemed to be entirely free from pain. His mind was unclouded to the last. The serene expression of his countenance indicated that he was in perfect peace. The last sounds which reached him were the sweet strains of his sister's harp, rising in a hymn of praise to the Great Father, into one of the many mansions of whose house he believed that he was about to enter. "How sweet those sounds are," he was heard to whisper almost with his dying breath. He sank very gently to rest. About 8 o'clock on the evening of the 5th of September, 1846, with a calm sweet smile on his long-tortured face, Charles Theophilus, first and last Lord Metcalfe, rendered up his soul to his Maker.

He was buried in the family vault of the Metcalfes, in the parish church of Winkfield, near Ferm Hill. He had often in life expressed a wish that this should be his last resting-place. On the 15th of September his remains were removed thither for interment. The funeral was entirely a private one. Only the immediate members of his family, one or two of his executors, and Mr. Martin were present, when this great and good man was laid in his grave.

On a marble tablet, in Winkfield Church, may be read the following inscription, written by one of the first of living writers,* who knew him, and served with him, and appreciated his worth:

* Lord Macaulay.

Near this Stone is Laid
CHARLES THEOPHILUS, FIRST AND LAST LORD METCALFE,
A STATESMAN TRIED IN MANY HIGH POSTS AND DIFFICULT CONJUNCTURES,
AND FOUND EQUAL TO ALL.
THE THREE GREATEST DEPENDENCIES OF THE BRITISH CROWN
WERE SUCCESSIVELY ENTRUSTED TO HIS CARE.
IN INDIA HIS FORTITUDE, HIS WISDOM, HIS PROBITY, AND HIS MODERATION
ARE HELD IN HONOURABLE REMEMBRANCE
BY MEN OF MANY RACES, LANGUAGES, AND RELIGIONS.
IN JAMAICA, STILL CONVULSED BY A SOCIAL REVOLUTION,
HE CALMED THE EVIL PASSIONS
WHICH LONG SUFFERING HAD ENGENDERED IN ONE CLASS,
AND LONG DOMINATION IN ANOTHER.
IN CANADA, NOT YET RECOVERED FROM THE CALAMITIES OF CIVIL WAR,
HE RECONCILED CONTENDING FACTIONS
TO EACH OTHER AND TO THE MOTHER COUNTRY.
PUBLIC ESTEEM WAS THE JUST REWARD OF HIS PUBLIC VIRTUE,
BUT THOSE ONLY WHO ENJOYED THE PRIVILEGE OF HIS FRIENDSHIP
COULD APPRECIATE THE WHOLE WORTH OF HIS GENTLE AND NOBLE NATURE.
COSTLY MONUMENTS IN ASIATIC AND AMERICAN CITIES
ATTEST THE GRATITUDE OF NATIONS WHICH HE RULED;
THIS TABLET RECORDS THE SORROW AND THE PRIDE
WITH WHICH HIS MEMORY IS CHERISHED BY PRIVATE AFFECTION.
HE WAS BORN THE 30TH DAY OF JANUARY, 1785.
HE DIED THE 5TH DAY OF SEPTEMBER, 1846.

Charles Metcalfe left behind him no heir to his title; but he of whom such words as these are but the sober truth, needs not a long line of barons after him to keep alive in the mind of posterity the memory of the great deeds which ennobled the name of Metcalfe. What he did —what he was—these few weighty sentences fitly record. I am almost tempted to add nothing to them. It is hardly necessary, after what I have written, to attempt an elaborate description of Charles Metcalfe's character. Indeed, there was so much simplicity in that character, that any subtle analysis of it would in itself constitute an untruth.

I trust that the most noticeable peculiarity of the man has been made apparent in these pages. Perhaps, in no example of ancient or of modern times, is there to be found a rarer combination of gentleness and power. With all the manlier qualities of high courage and inflexible resolution which enabled him in great public affairs to triumph over the opposition, and to baffle the cunning of his enemies, he united a tenderness so womanly, a simplicity so childlike, and a patience and forbearance so almost angelic, that you could with difficulty believe that he had been exposed, from his boyhood, to all the indurating and exasperating influences of public life. But the goodness of his heart and the honesty of his nature were proof against all such trials. Nothing could pollute the one or corrupt the other. From the beginning to the end of his career he was as free from malignity as he was from guile. He could neither hate an enemy, nor deceive him."

To speak of his public and his private life as of things apart from each other would be difficult, if it would be true. It is scarcely possible to separate the statesman from the man. The wonder is, that, being so much a statesman, he found so much time to be a man, and that, being so much a man, he found so much time to be a statesman. For nearly half a century he lived perpetually in the harness of public business. He devoted himself all day and every day to the duties of his office. No statesman ever did so much for himself and left so little to others. He seemed to love labour for its own sake. He was never satisfied unless he were giving himself up wholly to the public service. And yet, in spite of this negation of his individual humanity in all its private and domestic relations, he has left behind him so many and such interesting records of his private life, that the biographer is continually forgetting the Secretary, the Resident, the Councillor, or the Governor, of whom it is his

duty to write. It was said of him, that it was marvellous to think of the amount of business which he performed with his own head and his own hand. But it was still more marvellous, that, doing so much business with his own head and his own hand, he still found so much time for the exercise of the heart.

Although there was nothing more striking in the character of Charles Metcalfe than the rare union of the qualities which make the successful statesman and the loveable friend, he had many fine individual qualities in noticeable excess. Of some of these I have already spoken —of his honesty, his directness of purpose, of his love of truth and justice—when summing up the characteristics of his Indian career. It was in later life that his extraordinary courage was manifested to the greatest advantage. Of his moral bravery no small portion of these volumes is one great illustration. Of his physical courage, the wonderful composure with which he submitted to the most excruciating surgical operations, and the uncomplaining fortitude with which he bore up against the continued action of the most grievous pain, are proofs almost without a parallel in the history of human suffering. His extreme coolness under sudden and imminent peril was as remarkable as his great powers of endurance.* Nothing could disturb his self-possession or weaken the habitual command which he exercised over the ordinary passions of humanity. Nothing ever seemed to startle or to betray him into any sudden excesses of which he had afterwards reason to repent. In the most difficult and alarming conjunctures his

* On one occasion, when sitting after dinner with his secretary in Jamaica, a shock of an earthquake was felt, so severe as to throw down the decanters on the table. Amidst the general alarm created by this convulsion of nature, Metcalfe remained unmoved. "My good fellow," he said calmly to his secretary, with the placid smile, which was seldom absent, still upon his face, "don't be alarmed. It is only an earthquake."

courage pre-eminently asserted itself; and yet, as I have said, with all this manliness of character, he united the gentleness of a woman and the simplicity of a child.

His exalted sense of public duty was a part of his general unselfishness of character. It was this unselfishness, which, whilst it rendered himself so loveable in private life, caused him at all times to disregard his own ease and comfort, his health, and even life itself, whenever the interests of the State required that he should make the sacrifice. He was not without ambition; but it was a noble ambition to serve his country, to do good to his fellows, and to set an example to mankind. He never condescended to any of the common arts by which many men acquire high station, but pursued his unostentatious career without ever soliciting the favour of the great or courting the applause of the vulgar. The steps by which he rose to greatness were patent to the whole world. He never intrigued himself, and was never the object of an intrigue. Place and power sought him without the aid of Party. The biographer, when he approaches those epochs of Charles Metcalfe's life when the Chief-Minister, now of one party, now of another, bestows upon him two of the highest offices under the Crown, finds that he has nothing to conceal and very little to record. A brief note or a verbal message, unsought and unexpected, twice brought Metcalfe from his retirement, and made him the ruler of a great colony. The simplicity of these transactions was in unison with the general simplicity of his character. What was honestly offered he honestly accepted. There was no under-current of motive on either side. He met with some eager opponents, whose policy it was to lower his character in the estimation of his fellows; but neither the malignancy nor the craft of Party ever styled him an adventurer.

His self-reliance was extreme. He desired to share with

others neither the labour nor the responsibility of office. It was not in his nature to shrink from sustaining single-handed a conflict with any confederacy of opponents. Yet, however sorely he may have been beset, he never resorted to a trick or demeaned himself by a subterfuge. He was above all shifts and expedients. His honesty was of so fine a temper, that what other men regarded as the rightful weapons of self-defence, he flung away as unworthy of his employment. Trusting always to a good cause and a stout heart, he scorned to take advantage of an enemy; and it was said of him that his fairness was so extreme, that if his adversary made a false step, he would rather help him to right himself than profit by his error. This made him, as I have before said, a very bad tactician; and men who did not understand his character, and could not appreciate the refinement of his honesty, sometimes attributed to obtuseness of apprehension what was the growth of the purest love of truth and the most delicate sense of honour.*

* One who knew Metcalfe well, and whose opinions are entitled to all respect, in a brief sketch, written since the publication of this work, offers an emphatic comment on the spotless integrity of his friend. The entire sketch claims insertion:—

"Metcalfe closed the list of Indian statesmen to whom we owe the establishment of our Eastern Empire,—Clive, Hastings, Wellesley, Metcalfe. His mind was eminently constructive. He was 'the wise master builder,' who 'laid the foundation,' and 'another class of statesmen buildeth thereon.' He was the last of the *founders* of our Indian Empire, as Lord William Bentinck was the first of the new order of statesmen, whose special principle it is to build on that foundation a structure which will be to the everlasting benefit and honour of India and England. This was his peculiar claim to public gratitude; but it was also a great merit to him, that when the new era of improvement commenced, towards the close of his career, he cordially recognised and adopted native education, freedom of discussion, and other movements in advance of that description. I well recollect that when we commenced our efforts for instructing the natives in the literature and science of Europe, on a comprehensive plan, I awaited

The strong common sense which has been so often described as the great staple of his intellectual character, was a common sense of a peculiar order. The very reverse of that lawyer-like sagacity which so often usurps the name, it was distinguished by nothing so much as a clear perception of the essential features of the business before him, and a habit of stripping every question of external incumbrances and distractions, and going directly to the very core of his subject. It has been already said of his Indian State-papers that there was a massive simplicity about them, and the same description may be applied with equal fidelity to his Colonial despatches. A large number of these are simple narratives, remarkable for the clearness with which the story is told, and the ease with which important opinions are conveyed through this plain historical medium. He seldom paused to theorise or to speculate. He was eminently a practical man; and he knew the value

the announcement of Metcalfe's opinion with considerable trepidation; and was not less surprised than gratified at finding him take a decided line in our favour. The impression I received at the time was, that if it had belonged to his age and position to take the initiative, he would have been as active as any of us; and I admired the liberal disinterested feeling which induced him to countenance and protect an undertaking, of which he could only see the commencement. He had another claim upon our admiration, to which I must allude, because I myself have been comforted and supported by it in a time of danger and perplexity. 'Incorrupta fides' is truly said to be 'justitiæ soror;' and *justice* is the tenure by which we hold our Indian Empire. Now, what man set the example of spotless integrity from an earlier period, more eminently or more consistently than Metcalfe? I feel this so strongly (and I have had more than usual opportunities of judging), that I should set this above all his other excellent qualities."

I may mention, I believe without offence, that this was written by Sir Charles Trevelyan, to a friend who was writing a review of the present work in the *Edinburgh Review*, where the above passage will be found. (No. 207, page 176.)

of time too well to embarrass a Colonial Minister with discussions on abstract questions and elaborate expositions of opinions which might never be enforced.

He was not free from failings and weaknesses; but they were those only of noble minds and of kindly natures. His failings "leaned to virtue's side," and there was a certain strength in his weakness. It was imputed to him that he was "open to flattery," and over-eager to serve his friends. In both cases, if he erred, his affectionate disposition betrayed him into the error. He delighted in the approbation of the familiar friends by whom he was surrounded, believing it to be an evidence of their attachment; and he was never ashamed of avowing that he coveted "the love and good opinion of his fellow men."* His friendship was of a character that could not satisfy itself unless it conferred substantial benefits upon the object of it. How ready he was to do this, from his own private resources, all can testify with whom he was associated.†

* See Clarendon's character of Lord Falkland, the following passage in which has been before applied to Lord Metcalfe:—"He was wonderfully beloved by all who knew him. Of a wit so playful and a nature so open, that nothing could be more lovely; of such general knowledge, that he was not uninformed in anything—yet of such an excessive humility, as if he had known nothing; of inimitable cheerfulness and delight in conversation; of a flowing and obliging humanity and goodness to mankind; and of a primitive simplicity and integrity of life. He was a person superior to all those passions and affections which attend vulgar minds, and was guilty of no other ambition than that of knowledge, and of the love and good opinion of his fellow men; and that made him a contemner of those arts which must be indulged in the transactions of human affairs."

† It has been shown, that having appointed Captain Higginson to his private staff at Canada, the salary being 300*l.* a year, he offered to add to it 1,000*l.* a year from his private purse. A member of his staff in India, Major J. D. Stokes, being necessitated to proceed to England for the benefit of his health, Sir Charles Metcalfe insisted upon his taking with him an unlimited letter of

But if unlimited private wealth had been at his disposal, he would still have desired to place it in the power of his friends to advance themselves by their own exertions in the public service. He was wont to say, that if he promoted young and comparatively untried men, he knew their qualifications for office, and felt more confidence in them, than in strangers of longer experience or higher repute; and I do not know an instance in which the result did not justify his expectations.

Still, if it be admitted that the Roman heroism which sustained him in any sacrifice of self to the public service was not exercised with equal severity when the welfare of his friends was at stake, and if it be added that no more grievous imputation than this has ever been brought against him, I am not sure that the admission will not rather enhance than impair the beauty of Charles Metcalfe's character. In the largeness and the overflow of his affections there was something so engaging, that even the weaknesses into which it may have betrayed him are not to be contemplated without a feeling of admiration. The "rich loving-kindness, redundantly kind," which distinguished him above all other examples with which I am acquainted, was continually exercising itself in deeds of the gentlest condescension and the purest charity; and they who approached him the most nearly, who lived in the most familiar intercourse with him, and were admitted the most intimately within the influence of the habitual tenderness of his nature and playfulness of his spirit, were those not only to lavish upon him the truest love, but to regard him with the most genuine admiration.

credit (which was not used) on his London agents. It should be added, that in more than one instance, when solicited to exert his influence to obtain for a friend's son an appointment in the Company's service, he has sent the applicant money to purchase a commission in the royal army.

There have been many more brilliant men than Charles Metcalfe, and many more profound. Many have possessed a larger knowledge of men and books. Many have been more intimately acquainted with principles of government and theories of legislation, and better skilled in the art of displaying their knowledge to the world. But there are few examples on record of men in whom the finest moral qualities have been united with so healthy an intellect—so sound an understanding. And I do not depreciate his ability as a statesman, when I say—knowing how much the value of the great lesson contained in the history of his career is enhanced by the saying—that his intellectual qualities alone would never have obtained for him the high rank which he is destined to take among his cotemporaries of the nineteenth century. As long as this example is before the world, it will appear, to the honour of our country, that the highest distinction may be gained without the aid of party, without the aid of personal influence, without resort to any unworthy means of advancement, without the least compromise of independence, without even the possession of brilliant talents or the achievement of any striking acts—but simply by a life of unostentatious service to the State, even in a distant dependency of the Crown, fervently, conscientiously, unremittingly rendered, in humble reliance on, and in continued thankfulness to, the Almighty—in a word, by such public virtue as distinguished the career of CHARLES THEOPHILUS METCALFE.

APPENDIX TO VOL. II.

CORRESPONDENCE WITH DR. GOODALL.

[HAVING introduced in the first chapter of this volume a letter to Sir Charles Metcalfe from his old preceptor Dr. Goodall, I cannot resist the temptation to give a few more brief passages from the venerable Provost's letters to his young friend. It seems that the Hyderabad Resident had been indulging his characteristic kindness and liberality by sending home, from time to time, not only handsome Indian shawls and scarfs for Mrs. Goodall, but many valuable contributions to the Provost's cabinet of curiosities. Many of the letters preserved by the recipient were indited in acknowledgment of these gifts. They are written in a pleasant, playful strain of learned pedantry and bombast; the genial nature of the man breaking out in every sentence. Doubtless, it was not the least of Metcalfe's compensations, among the many trials of his official life, to receive these kindly greetings from *Alma Mater*, and to know that he imparted the same happiness that he received. "Of all the rewards that crown tuition," wrote the old Eton tutor to the Hyderabad Resident, "that which your partial affection has from time to time bestowed on me, by reverting to days that are long since past, though evidently not swallowed up in the gulf of oblivion, is, beyond all comparison, most grateful to the feelings." I am afraid that gratitude towards the framers of our youth is a plant of no common growth. We remember their manual dexterity long after anything else. But that it was not so with Metcalfe, how pleasantly such an acknowledgment as this bears witness. The passage is as characteristic of the recipient as of the writer of the letter.]

"Mrs. Goodall has, I know, written to thank you for your most magnificent present, which I can assure you I found not the least difficulty in persuading her to accept. Turkeys and chines—hares and pheasants—Stilton and Cottenham cheeses, hide your diminished heads, nor dare to vie with the princely magnificence

of an Oriental donor: "My dear Metcalfe, you must never hope to be able to return to England with lacks and lacks unless you check your generous spirit, and practice a little wholesome skill in the science of arithmetic. Suppose that the genius of old Hexter was embodied in the form of a Pundit, and proposed for your consideration the following problem:—If, from a moderate sum, you take away a great deal, proportionally speaking, how many years longer will elapse before you can accumulate the required product?" Work this by a and $b + c = d + x$, and state the probable result. Were illuminated Persian MSS. as easily picked up at Dihlee* (I bow with due submission to my orthography-mender), or Ispahan (spelt *archaicé*, for the want of instruction), as stray Horaces and stray Poetæ Græci's in the playing-fields or at the steps near the shirking walls, I would say, 'Welcome, thou ornament to my study, though I do not understand you, I can, at least, do as children do, and admire the pictures;' but if you will go on practising the rule of subtraction, instead of adding and multiplying—how shall I finish my sentence? I will only say, that you give too munificent proof that the *æruyo* and *cure peculi* has not cankered your mind. I shall, however, feel it to be my duty not to attempt to read your precious testimony of your kind regard, till I can have you at my elbow. Remember it was you who first put me out of conceit with Oriental literature, in the first acceptable though flattering letter which you sent me from your universal country. For that India is only viewed by you as a step-dame (which Horne Tooke, a better grammarian than citizen, will tell you is a corruption of stead—or sted—dame), is tolerably evident from the whole tenor and complexion of your letters."

[In the same letter the worthy doctor writes pleasantly of the conchological distemper that had broken out upon him, and beseeches the Nabob to send him a few shells from the Oriental world:]

"At fifty-six a man may be indulged with a hobby; and what nag do you imagine that I have mounted?" Oriental literature I have disclaimed; Nimrod's propensities are not mine. To the black-letter'd Bibliomaniacs I own no fellowship. My limbs are not supple enough to become an active Lepidopterist. I adorn my garden and my green-house in moderation; but my rage is an

* Metcalfe always spelt the name of the imperial city "Dihlee." I am afraid that I have not retained his orthography, even in his own letters, but have barbarised it into "Delhi."

accumulation of certain modifications of calcareous matter, generally known by the name of shells. Now, should you in your travels chance to light upon any of the testaceous gentry who inhabit the waters of the eastern rivers, and can, without expense or difficulty, put by a few of them, in a small wafer-box, marking their habitats, if you can ascertain them, let them travel with your baggage on your return, and put them into my hands at the Lodge. Say do, and I will say I cordially thank you."

[This letter was written when Charles Metcalfe was at Delhi. He was at Hyderabad when the following reached him. It alludes to the Eton dinners which he had given a year before in Calcutta, and shows that he had made a conscription of the desired "testaceous gentry:"]

"*Cloisters, Windsor, Feb.* 21, 1821.—Not 'coy Mathesis!' What! did no carved sylph, no triangular gnome, whisper or bellow on the banks of the Gunga, that Lefevre, an Etonian, was the senior wrangler of his year? Were I not on the hill (not quite so high as Himalaya,) and consequently not able to examine my Etonian notices, which I have left in the valley, I could probably add three or four names, at least, enrolled among the wranglers of the last two or three years. You must, therefore, at *the* next anniversary (*the* και ἐξοχήν) make the *amende honorable* by drinking the health of two Etonians, whose mathematical pre-eminence is recorded in the tripos of their respective years, Herschel and Lefevre. You need not mention that Herschel left us in the lower school. I was quite delighted at your patriotic establishment, and did I know the day of celebration, I would at least be with you in spirit, when *Floreat Etona* is 'hipped,' with three times three. The report of your filial attachment to our common mother gladdened the heart of a septuagenary at one of our public days, who, with tears in his eyes, though not without a little Oriental amplification, declared that thirty years ago, at a similar meeting, the same pious words were echoed with such appalling reverberations, that all the crocodiles in the neighbourhood, smitten with terror, plunged themselves into the sacred stream. Should it so happen that the old fellow's health, of whom you speak, should ever again be drunk in your alcoves, have the goodness to express his grateful acknowledgment of their kind partiality to the assembled Etonians of the day, from the *venerable* Leycester (by-the-bye, are you sure that he is ycleped George? if he be the 'Scagger' I wot of he bore another name of yore) to the youngest 'sage' of the company. I need

not say with what pleasure we shall enrol in our catalogue any books with which the affectionate remembrance of our Indian colonists may enrich us. Your kind brother has already furnished us with the first steps of knowledge to enable us to become apprentices to mandarins, or what not, by presenting us with all that is published of the Chinese dictionary. It will, moreover, give me additional pleasure to renew my acquaintance with a pupil who gave such fair promise of future attainments as Trant did so many years ago. Mrs. Goodall begs me to say, that though she has long since made over her collection of seals to some of my nieces, she has stored in her choicest cabinet of curiosities the two seals which you have so kindly transmitted to her, and that she most heartily thanks the administrator of the empire, the ruler of the country, the attached Lord C. T. M., the hero, the glory of war, adding that, though your godfather, the King of Dihlee (poor simple soul as I am, to think that I could spell the word), may have given a little flourish of Oriental hyperbole, there is, as she learns from authentic sources, a considerable portion of fundamental truth. She desired me further to say, that aware as she is of the difficulty of procuring the seals to which you refer, ['especially as she has dismounted from her ancient hobby,' these words I am answerable for] she is most unwilling to trespass either on your time or kindness on that head.

"You will already have concluded that your kind conchological present never reached me. Whether they returned to their native ocean, were purloined by a Triton in their passage, or, which is more probable, were intercepted at the Custom House, is a problem which I will not attempt to solve. At all events, I must tender you my most hearty thanks for the trouble (and not only the trouble) of collecting for me what I doubt not would have proved some of the choicest gems of my cabinet. A similar disappointment has befallen me with respect to a few shells which your brother forwarded to me from Canton. When I had the pleasure of seeing him at Eton, he imagined that they were recoverable, but has, I believe, since discovered that they elude all search. I am not without hopes that we shall shortly have the pleasure of seeing him again at Eton (his former was a mere flying visit), as I have reason to think that he will in the course of next month redeem his pledge. The last account I received of his health was much more favourable; and, indeed, when I met him in town, about two months since, he had in great measure recovered his looks. May the Almighty grant that he may be perfectly convalescent before he leaves his native shores!

I will not give my consent for his departure till his physicians say he may go in perfect confidence of not suffering by his voyage, or future residence at Canton.

"Next week I close my sixty-first year, in a better state of health than from the sedentary life I have led I could possibly expect, and, thanks be to God, I have hitherto felt only the gradual approaches of old age. I can read from morning to night with unwearied eyes; I can enjoy the society of my friends, young as well as old, and, on particular occasions, can walk fifteen or sixteen miles, provided I am by the sea-side—*e. g.*, I walked last June from Worthing to Little Hampton and back again between breakfast and dinner, with no other bad consequence than the entire loss of the skin of my face, which peeled off in due time. I do not read quite so much Greek as formerly, but I have lately attempted to learn Hebrew and Spanish. My progress in the former language is slow. My master, though a good grammarian, has not the best method of teaching. I at first suspected the scholar to be in fault, but I must only plead parcel guilty, as I understand that my fellow-scholars agree with me in the opinion which I have formed of my instructor, for whom I have a great respect. If you wish to know in what part of the school I am, know by these presents, that I am in the second form in Hebrew, and in the fourth in Spanish. Apropos of my master, he was travelling to town in the Windsor and Eton stage, when a talkative solicitor of the neighbourhood having entered rather warmly into some discussion with him, wished him to reconsider something he had advanced, and concluded his speech by adjuring him to do so, as he was an Englishman and a Christian. 'Sir,' says his antagonist, with the most perfect phlegm, 'I am an Italian Jew.'"

[The next letter, written in the same year, from the "Lodge, Eton Cloisters," acknowledges the receipt of the desired pabulum for the Provost's hobby-horse, but only after the wonted desecrations of the Custom-house.]

"I must now beg your Excellency to accept Mrs. Goodall's and my grateful acknowledgments for your voluminous and magnificent present, which contained many very beautiful and interesting specimens, the greater part of which arrived safe and entire; but the carelessness of the good people of the Custom-house had repacked the more fragile bivalves with such total disregard of the danger to which their new position exposed them, that they were shattered into fragments. Only one of the

mactræ, a beautiful totally white bivalve, escaped uninjured. Even the nautili, which are not of so frail a nature, were curtailed of their fair proportions by the clumsiness of the re-stockers. The proportion, however, of the damaged shells was not more than that of one to eleven; the rest arrived in undiminished beauty. Above four parts of the whole were recent shells, and, indeed, almost all of the more scarce species. Some of the more common kinds had parted with their inhabitants before they were collected; but fortunately my cabinet was already provided with these sorts. One species, which is particularly liable to injury, and is considered as a more scarce shell, escaped mischief altogether: it is yclept 'Helix Hæmostoma.' Your bounty has multiplied my unique specimen into five. Mrs. Goodall means to dress up one case from your present entirely, and to baptise it by the appellative 'Metcalfean.' And now, scold you I must not, for it would be hypocrisy to say that I was not delighted with the totality of your munificence; but I cannot refrain from observing that had I entertained the most distant idea of the enormous expense to which my request would have exposed you, I should never have made it. My petition was for pieces of brass, and you have enacted Jupiter Pluvius and showered down gold on me. I begged for a few inhabitants of your rivers, and you have transmitted me, in profusion, the spoils of the ocean. . . . .

"And so you will no longer preside at the Bachelor's ball in your full court dress, nor celebrate our *Alma Mater* at the next Calcutta anniversary. Etonians must be *raræ aves* at Hyderabad, which place, however, if it has any taste, most surely *Golconda libertius audit*. Many, many thanks to you for your kind offer. At present I know no Hyderabadian or Golcondist whom I am desirous to recommend to your protection; but should I hereafter avail myself of your permission, be assured that I will not abuse it by recommending any one of whom I cannot confidently say, *Scribe tui gregis hunc, et fortem crede bonum*. May you experience in your new situation all the pleasure and advantages which you have pictured in your imagination! May you proceed in your career with gentle gales, and under a serene sky, in the full enjoyment of the friendship of that circle which you have selected!"

[In a graver strain is the following, written at a somewhat later period, in reply to one of Metcalfe's letters from Hyderabad, expatiating on the benefits which he hoped would result from his superintendance of the administration of the Nizam's territories.]

"The picture which you draw of your situation and of the means of doing so much and so essential good, is delightful. The passions, prejudices, and interests of writers distort to such a degree the character of the people of the East, that it is a matter of the greatest difficulty to reduce one's opinion of the inhabitants of different districts to any one general standard, or, perhaps, I should speak more correctly were I to say, to form a just opinion of any. What has always appeared to me to be the greatest obstacle to the happiness of the subjects of native princes is the danger of their considering too gentle a government as indicative of fear on the part of their rulers, and consequently if, as seems to be the case, they are of a restless and unquiet spirit, there is further danger of their being influenced by some master-mover of their worst passions to attempt some rash scheme, which would be more likely to subvert than to secure their happiness. I have heard it again and again asserted that they must be driven, for they will not be led; but I have often thought that though this may be almost strictly true with respect to their native rulers, still, under that universally admitted opinion of European superiority and the acknowledged inefficacy of resistance to European power, there can be no reason to doubt that the vigilant protection of the resident authorities, armed as they are with the means of enforcing obedience to their regulations, may, where there is a due mixture of gentleness and severity, counteract the evil designs of the turbulent, and, to a great degree at least, improve the general situation of the whole population.

"It has been the result of all my reflection on the much-agitated question of the probability of introducing Christianity among the Hindoos, that the only practicable mode of conversion is the gradual weaning them from their absurd notions by opening to them every possible source of rational information; and that this most desirable end can only be effected by mildness and gentle persuasion, strengthened by that most powerful of all influences —the influence of example, the pure lives of those who labour for their conversion. But I am travelling out beyond the record; I am addressing the redresser of political evils, not the missionary. All I meant to say is, that I am fully convinced that your successful labours must promote, in a great degree, the more important concern of religious improvement,—gradually, perhaps, but not therefore less certainly. With the increase of the Nizam's revenue, the increase of his subjects' worldly happiness, I will hope that the chances of extending the great, the glorious work of the propagation of the Gospel will, to say the least, be greatly

facilitated; and whatever future annalists may record or not record, I trust that among the nations on whom you shower such important blessings,

"Semper honos, nomenque tuum, laudesque manebunt."

It is delightful to have such honourable motives for self-gratulation, and you cannot draw on a surer bank for happiness than from the consciousness of not only meaning, but doing well. Yet, alas! human nature is on the whole everywhere so far the same, that the great mass of mankind are self-interested and ungrateful. In the midst of those whom you labour to benefit with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength, you will find a plentiful crop of these abominable tares, and you will perhaps have to regret that the hopes of your harvest are ultimately destroyed. But, *Dii, meliora piis!* May you continue to prosecute your useful and patriotic efforts without experiencing any of those drawbacks which a croaking prophet of evil may needlessly call up to the imagination."

[There was, indeed, "a plentiful crop of these abominable tares," and they were growing up in rank luxuriance when Metcalfe received this beautiful letter, and recognised in his inmost soul the truth of these prophetic utterances of his old preceptor.]

THE FALL OF BHURTPORE.

(Page 45.)

LORD AMHERST TO SIR CHARLES METCALFE.

Calcutta, January 29, 1826.

My dear Sir Charles,—At two o'clock this morning the Bhurtpore letters were put into my hands, and it was with peculiar satisfaction that amongst them I acknowledged one in your handwriting.

Nothing, indeed, can have been more complete than your success; nor am I aware that there is anything wanting to give to the capture of Bhurtpore a pre eminent place amongst the political and military events in the history of India.

That in undertaking this great achievement I was principally influenced by your advice, I shall readily acknowledge. You would have shared the disgrace of failure, and must, therefore, be admitted to the honours of the triumph.

That the policy which dictated the measure was sound I

doubt not we shall have abundant proof; but this leads me to observe to you, that even without the transcendent lustre of Bhurtpore I have for some time past been cheered by a brighter prospect than I had before enjoyed in looking towards the Upper Provinces.

Interspersed with your despatches relating to Dhorjun Saul, we have received from you several adverting to other powers within your political jurisdiction and control, especially Jyepore, which have given me full reason to think that the influence of your judgment alone, without the aid of a powerful army, would have placed our relations with neighbouring states on a more secure and advantageous footing than it has yet been my lot to witness.

It has been a source, I assure you, of no little pride and satisfaction to me to find that the pencil observations which I have usually made in the margin of the despatches of your subordinate agents have universally, I may say, been in unison with your own sentiments, as expressed in the copies of your replies.

You have closed your letter to me with a little devotion, and one which I see proceeds from your heart, from the usual terminating phrase. I will follow your example, and will tell you that I remain, with gratitude for your past services, and with the fullest confidence in those which are to come,

My dear Sir Charles,

Your faithful and obedient servant,

AMHERST.

The interest which you manifest in the safety of my son is not lost either upon Lady Amherst or myself.—A.

THE CIVIL DUTIES OF THE DELHI RESIDENCY.

(Page 46.)

TO SIR C. T. METCALFE, BART.,

Resident and Commissioner at Delhi, and Agent to the Governor-General for the States of Rajpootana.

Council Chamber, September 1, 1825.

SIR,—With reference to the communication made to you from the Political Department under date the 20th of May

last, I am directed by the Right Honourable the Governor-General in Council to transmit to you for your information the subjoined copy of a Resolution this day passed by Government, on the subject of the Revenue Management of the Western Provinces and of the territory of Delhi.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

HOLT MACKENZIE,

Secretary to the Government.

RESOLUTION.

1. With reference to the Resolution * passed in the Political Department relative to the future management of the Delhi territory, his Lordship in Council is pleased to pass the following Resolutions in regard to the Board of Revenue for the Western Provinces.

2. The authority of that Board within the Delhi territory will cease from the date on which Sir Charles Metcalfe may assume charge of his office. The sphere of their jurisdiction, comprising the collectorships and sub-collectorships noted in the margin,† it appears to be obviously desirable that their head-quarters should be fixed at some central place within that jurisdiction. The Governor-General in Council is disposed to think that Bareilly would be the most appropriate station. But before coming to any final resolution, his Lordship in Council is desirous of receiving a communication from the Board of their sentiments on the subject.

3. When the Board is relieved from the charge of the Delhi territory, three members will, apparently, be amply sufficient for the due conduct of the public business; although to the senior member will still belong the same political duties as were attached to that officer before the extension of the Board's authority to Delhi; and although the revision of the detailed settlements now in progress must obviously throw upon the Board an extent of labour far exceeding what was necessary for

* Dated May 20, 1825.

† Agra, Bareilly, Etawah—collectorship and sub-collectorship; Furruckabad, Moradabad—northern and southern divisions, Meerut, Shahjehanpore, Seharunpore, Ally Ghur, Boolundshahur, &c., &c., &c.—sub-collectorship; Pillibheet, ditto; Sapoorah, ditto; Mozuffernuggur, ditto; Saidabad, Kumaon—commissionership.

the administration of much more extensive provinces under the former system. Mr. Ewer's appointment as officiating member of the Board will consequently cease on Sir Charles Metcalfe's assuming charge of the affairs of the Delhi territory.

4. The Governor-General in Council is pleased to appoint Mr. C. Elliott senior member of the Board, which will still retain the denomination of Board of Revenue for the Western Provinces. In that capacity (including the political duties annexed to it) Mr. Elliott will draw from the present date a salary of 5,000 rupees per mensem; and referring to the extent and responsibility of the political duties which Mr. Elliott has had to discharge as acting agent to the Governor-General at Delhi, which have much exceeded what was contemplated when the transfer of Delhi to the Board was ordered; with advertence likewise to the saving which has accumulated since the offices of senior member of the Western Board and agent to the Governor-General at Delhi were vacated in April last, his Lordship in Council resolves that Mr. Elliott be authorised to draw the difference between the above salary of 5,000 rupees per mensem and the amount of monthly allowances (fixed and temporary) actually received by him for the period during which he has officiated as senior member of the Board and Agent to the Governor-General at Delhi.

5. The Board will, of course, consider and report what modification of their establishment may be necessary or expedient under the arrangement now ordered.

6. With respect to the revenue affairs of Delhi, it appears to be unnecessary to pass any immediate orders. The appointment of Sir Charles Metcalfe will not apparently render necessary any change of system. And if that gentleman shall deem it requisite to seek the aid of any new establishment to enable him to exercise an efficient control over the district officers, the point will, of course, be further considered in communication with him. His Lordship in Council cannot, however, omit this opportunity of again calling for detailed statements of the Mehals, comprising the several divisions of the Delhi districts, exhibiting the amount of juma assessed on each, the period of settlement, the nature of the management, the names and

characters of the Malgoozars, with such other particulars as have usually been supplied by the settlement accounts of the regulation provinces, as far as there may be materials for stating them. The above statements should be accompanied with general reports for each division, explanatory of the mode in which the settlement may have been made, the character, institutions, and circumstances of the people, and the general statistics of the country.

(A true copy.) HOLT MACKENZIE,
Secretary to the Government.

THE LIBERATION OF THE INDIAN PRESS.

(Page 148-149.)

[Having in the chapter devoted to this subject given only a portion of Metcalfe's Manifesto of the 20th of June, 1835, I am induced, by a consideration of the importance of the document, to give it entire in this place.]

GENTLEMEN,—On the part of my colleagues in the Government, as well as on my own, I sincerely thank you for this testimony of your approbation of our proceedings and for the obliging manner in which it is expressed; but highly as I prize your esteem, I will not underrate the character of this address, by regarding it as designed principally to convey a compliment. You have adopted this mode of giving authentic expression to public opinion on a great question, in which the happiness of all India, it may be said of all the world, is concerned.

I rejoice to meet you on this ground, and to join my humble voice to yours in favour of that measure, which will, I trust, in due course, be consummated.

I need not to you defend a proposed law which you cordially approve; but there may be some who are not satisfied that it is either necessary or safe. I will, therefore, avail myself of this opportunity to state, as briefly as possible, the reasons by which it appears to me to be justified and recommended.

To all who doubt the expediency of the liberty of the press, I would say that they have to show that it must necessarily cause imminent peril to the public safety, such as would not exist

without it, and cannot be averted by statutary laws; for otherwise there can be no doubt that freedom of public discussion, which is nothing more than the freedom of speaking aloud, is a right belonging to the people, which no government has a right to withhold.

It also rests with them to show that the communication of knowledge is a curse and not a benefit; and that the essence of good government is to cover the land with darkness; for otherwise it must be admitted to be one of the most imperative duties of a government to confer the incalculable blessings of knowledge on the people; and by what means can this be done more effectually than by the unrestrained liberty of publication, and by the stimulus which it gives to the powers of the mind?

If their argument be, that the spread of knowledge may eventually be fatal to our rule in India, I close with them on that point, and maintain that, whatever may be the consequence, it is our duty to communicate the benefits of knowledge. If India could only be preserved as a part of the British Empire by keeping its inhabitants in a state of ignorance, our domination would be a curse to the country, and ought to cease.

But I see more ground for just apprehension in ignorance itself. I look to the increase of knowledge, with a hope that it may strengthen our empire, that it may remove prejudices, soften asperities, and substitute a rational conviction of the benefits of our Government; that it may unite the people and their rulers in sympathy, and that the differences which separate them may be gradually lessened and ultimately annihilated. Whatever, however, be the will of Almighty Providence respecting the future Government of India, it is clearly our duty, as long as the charge be confided to our hands, to execute the trust to the best of our ability for the good of the people. The promotion of knowledge, of which the liberty of the press is one of the most efficient instruments, is manifestly an essential part of that duty. It cannot be that we are permitted by Divine authority to be here merely to collect the revenues of the country, pay the establishments necessary to keep possession, and get into debt to supply the deficiency. We are, doubtless, here for higher purposes, one of which is to pour the enlightened knowledge and civilization, the arts and sciences of Europe over the land, and thereby improve the condition of the people.

Nothing surely is more likely to conduce to these ends than the liberty of the press.

Those who object to it are further bound to show that it is not salutary for the Government and its functionaries to have the check of a free press on their conduct; and that the exercise of arbitrary power over a restricted press is preferable to the control of the laws over a free one; assumptions which cannot be maintained.

The time was when the freedom of the press was considered as intolerable for any class in India. That has passed away, and many now admit that there is not much harm, and that there may be some good, in granting it to Europeans, but still entertain apprehensions as to its injurious effects if enjoyed by natives. I do not participate in those apprehensions; but of this I am sure, that to legislate in distrust of our native fellow-subjects, or to legislate differently for them and for Europeans, in matters of right and liberty, would be extremely unwise and unjustifiable policy. The press will always be under the safeguard of laws, and laws can be made where laws are wanting. The existence of a local legislature, which can at any time provide for the safety of the State, should it be endangered, has removed the only formidable bar which before opposed the complete liberty of the press.

In addition to the motives which must have existed, on general principles, for giving the fullest freedom, there were circumstances in the state of the press in India which rendered the measure now proposed almost unavoidable. The press had been practically free for many years, including the whole period of the administration of the late Governor-General, Lord William Bentinck; and although laws of restriction existed in Bengal which gave awful power to the Government, they had ceased to operate for any practical purpose. They were extremely odious. They gave to the Government arbitrary power, which British subjects in any part of the world detest. No Government could now have carried them into effect without setting universal opinion at defiance. After the liberty given by Lord William Bentinck's forbearance, no Government could have ventured to enforce those laws unless it had been gifted with a most hardy insensibility to ridicule and obloquy. Even supposing them to be good, they were

utterly useless; and as they brought unnecessary odium on the Government, it would have been absurd longer to retain them.

In speaking of those laws, I cannot refrain from adverting to the individual who, having been at the head of the Government when they were passed, bears all the blame of being their author. He was one of the best and purest and most benevolent men that ever lived. In proposing those laws, he must have been actuated, as he always was, by the most upright and conscientious motives. Had he been now alive, and at the head of this Government, he would probably have been among the foremost, to propose the abolition of those laws which he formerly thought necessary, but would now have seen to be useless and odious. To what a degree popular feeling prevails against them cannot be more strikingly shown than by the detraction which they have brought on the memory of one who was eminently deserving of all praise, distinguished by great talents and the most important public services, the soul of honour and virtue admired, beloved, revered by all who knew him, but condemned by the public, who knew him not, solely on account of these laws which they abhor.

In the Bengal and Agra Presidencies the question was, whether those laws should be retained or abolished; laws, be it observed, too unpopular to be executed, which in practice had in every respect become obsolete. In the provinces subordinate to Bombay there was the same question; but that was not the question in other parts of India. The question there was, shall such laws be introduced where they have not been known? Shall odious restrictions be imposed where there is already perfect freedom? Shall despotic power be substituted in the place of law, or of liberty unrestrained even by law? At Madras there was no local law, and there were no means of making any person responsible for what was published. At the Presidency of Bombay there was a law already existing, as free as that now proposed for all India. At Madras and Bombay, to have made any law short of perfect freedom, would have been to impose restrictions which did not before exist. Such a course would surely have been wrong, and was certainly unnecessary. A law was urgently required at Madras, where liberty existed without responsibility. We could not

legislate partially on such a subject; and the result of our deliberations was, that what is now proposed was the safest and the best law that could be devised. It gives perfect liberty; and all its subordinate provisions aim only at proper responsibility. Things could not remain as they were; and any law of restriction would have been sad retrogression in legislation, and totally opposed to the spirit of the age.

You have alluded most justly to the difficulties that beset the forming of a law to restrain all excesses and injuries which may be committed by means of the press. On this point, I fear, legislation is set at defiance. We cannot apparently enjoy the liberty of the press without being exposed to its licentiousness. We must submit to the attendant evil for the sake of the predominant good. Although the boundary between liberty and licentiousness is perceptible enough in practice, it can hardly be defined by law without the danger of encroaching on useful liberty. The laws of England have utterly failed to prevent the licentiousness of the press; and yet, perhaps, could hardly be made more efficient without endangering its freedom. Much, therefore, necessarily depends on the good sense and good taste of those who wield the power which the press confers. The worst enemies of the press are such of its conductors as destroy its influence by prostituting its use for the gratification of base passions. When public measures are fully and freely discussed, and censured or approved, as may be, in a spirit of candour and justice, the influence of the press must be great and beneficial. But when men find themselves the objects of gross personal scurrility, without any reference to public measures or real character and conduct, they may at first feel pain; because sensitive men with benevolent dispositions toward all their fellow-creatures, grieve to perceive that they have rancorous foes busily employed against them, but working in concealment, the cause of whose enmity they know not, and whose wrath they have no power to appease; but they cannot respect the instrument of unjust virulence; they must know that such attacks proceed from personal hatred or wanton malignity, and they must learn to despise calumny which cannot be guarded against by any goodness of measures, or any correctness of conduct. The proper influence of the press is thus destroyed; and ultimately just censure, which would

otherwise be respected and dreaded, is disregarded and discredited, and being confounded with the mass of indiscriminate abuse, loses its due effect.

I entirely concur with you in the desire which you entertain, that if at any time actual danger to the State should render necessary temporary or local restraints on the liberty of the press, the precautions applied by the Legislature may be only commensurate to the real exigency, and that no restrictions may be made permanent beyond those which are necessary to ensure responsibility; and I trust that all legislation, with a view to protect the community against licentiousness, will be in the true spirit of liberty.

I am sensible of your kindness in the wish which you have expressed that I may remain in my present office long enough to take a part in passing the proposed measure into a law. For two reasons I entertain the same wish. I am naturally desirous of having a share in the completion of a law which will, I trust, conduce to the welfare of India and mankind. I am also anxious to relieve the Governor-General elect from the responsibility of a measure regarding which long experience in India enables me to proceed without hesitation. On the other hand, there is a consideration which will more than reconcile me to the transfer of this duty to the hands of the distinguished nobleman appointed to this office. Fully believing that all the prepossessions of a British statesman, and especially of one who has witnessed the inferiority of countries where the press is enslaved, compared with his own, where it is free, must be in favour of the liberty of the press, I shall rejoice at his having an opportunity of commencing his administration with an act which will at once establish a good understanding and a cordial feeling between the head of the Government and the community over which he is to preside.

C. T. METCALFE.

THE PLAGUE AT PAHLI.

(Page 180.)

"The spread of the plague on the western frontier has excited much alarm even at this Presidency. The *Hurkaru*

says: 'There are in Calcutta many public offices and houses of business, particularly in the Burra Bazar, where communications are almost daily received from the districts where the plague is now raging, and we have not yet heard of any measures adopted to guard against the introduction of the plague in this city by means of such vehicles. Should the disease ever make its appearance in the crowded parts of the native town, no measure would be capable of arresting its progress; removal, separation, and blackade of houses in the Burra Bazar and its neighbourhood, appear to us equally impracticable.' The *Reformer* states that the Hindu community believe the disease to be a visitation from Heaven for the political sins of our Government, and that it will spread in spite of all our precautions. Sir C. Metcalfe has published an able minute on the subject. The first measure he directs is, the establishment of a cordon of posts along the frontiers, which is to prevent the ingress, into the British territories, of any person from the infected or suspected quarter without undergoing a quarantine. The precautions prescribed in carrying this measure into effect, are detailed in the minute, and insisted on with earnestness. Having fully explained the measures he would have the local authorities adopt to prevent the introduction of the pestilence into the interior, he calls the attention of the authorities to the steps which would be necessary in case the disease, notwithstanding the preventive cordon, were to insinuate itself into any of the towns and villages in the interior. Every possible attention to the prejudices of caste is strictly enjoined to the observance of those who are to have the charge of the patients in these establishments; but it is required that no consideration for the rank or the objections of the individuals concerned, be permitted to prevent their separation or removal from relations and houses, on the ground that the safety of the community depends upon these precautions. The local authorities have, however, the option, under cases of necessity, of allowing the inmates of an infected house to continue in it; but then the building is to be strictly blockaded, and guarded as if it were a separate hospital. The difficulties consequent on the requisite separation of near and dear relations from each other, under such direful circumstances, are fully appreciated by Sir Charles; and the only means he can suggest in case of

parties refusing to separate is, that the healthy should accompany the sick to the hospitals, and be subjected to the severe rules in force at those establishments. The houses from which infected persons may be removed are to be purified, with all the articles in them. The greatest care is prescribed in keeping the streets and drains of every town and village clean, and all sorts of filth, rags, &c. found in them, or in the houses of infected persons, are to be burned and the ashes buried; for even ashes have been known to convey this dreadful pest from place to place. In case the disease should spread, the inhabitants are to be confined to their respective houses, and have their food furnished to them under the rules prescribed for the hospitals and the towns and villages in which contagion exists, and they are to be cut off from free intercourse with other places, and kept under a strict blockade. Dresses made of oil skin and tar, and frequent friction with oil, have been found the best preservatives against contagion, when contact with infected persons cannot possibly be avoided. But the grand means of checking and annihilating the plague, is the prevention of contact with infected persons.

"The *Reformer* suggests native objections to these measures: 'The more we read of the disease now raging in Rajpootana, the more we become convinced of the impracticability, nay, the injurious tendency of some of the measures prescribed by Sir Charles Metcalfe for checking the evil. The dragging out of children and wives from the houses of wealthy and respectable natives, and incarcerating them in a lazaretto, are measures which, under existing circumstances, instead of producing any good, will be the cause of spreading the contagion more widely: those who ought to be removed will be left at home, and those who should be left at home will be removed to the lazaretto, there to catch the very disease we dread, and thus widen the sphere of devastation. The extortions which would be practised on the healthy as a ransom from the fangs of the quarantine officers, are incalculable. We fear all will, at one time or another, be exposed to extortion by these harpies, commissioned by Government to violate the hitherto unseen zenanas of the respectable people. The quarantine laws of the Levant, where the plague is familiar to all, are in many respects unsuited to this country. We therefore trust the Lieutenant-Governor

will use every precaution to guard against abuses, to which his plans, devised with the best intention, are open."—[*Asiatic Journal.*]

ADDRESS OF THE JAMAICA PLANTERS.

(Page 425.)

To the Right Honourable Sir Charles Theophilus Metcalfe, Bart., G.C.B., &c., &c., &c.

We, the planters, merchants, and others, interested in the colony of Jamaica, are desirous of offering to you the expression of our most sincere and cordial participation in those sentiments of admiration, esteem, affection, and gratitude, with which all classes of our fellow-colonists in Jamaica have acknowledged the benefits which your wise, able, beneficent, and impartial administration of its Government has conferred on them.

The office of that Government was made to you at a period the most eventful in the history of Jamaica. Her legislature was suspended—her constitutional rights had been invaded—her legislature, her magistracy, and her whole resident proprietary body had been misrepresented and calumniated—the relations which should subsist between the mother country and her colony, and between the different classes of society in that colony, were disturbed and impaired by mutual suspicion and distrust. Your acceptance, at such a crisis, of a trust so arduous and difficult of itself, entitled you to our warmest gratitude and to our highest admiration. It was in itself a pledge of the principles on which that trust would be executed. It was of itself the assurance that you had accepted the Government with the disinterested and noble purpose of rendering an essential service to your country, by restoring to her the confidence and affection of her most valuable colony.

To the accomplishment of this purpose your administration was unceasingly directed. The spirit of conciliation and confidence in which you acted towards the local legislature, the island magistracy, and all classes of the community—the candour with which you appreciated—the fidelity with which, in your communications to her Majesty's Government you represented—the uncompromising honesty with which you vin-

dicated their motives and their acts, and repelled the prejudices, the misrepresentations, and calumnies by which they had been assailed—the constitutional respect which you evinced for the institutions of the colony, and the strict impartiality with which you maintained the just rights of all, secured for your administration their entire confidence and their zealous and active support. Amongst the beneficial effects of your administration were the reconciliation of the colony with the mother country—the restoration of order, and harmony, and good feeling amongst all classes. Legislation resumed—laws passed adapted to the change which had taken place in the social relations of the inhabitants of Jamaica—the cordial and active co-operation of the legislature, notwithstanding the financial difficulties of the colony, in extending at a great cost the means of religious and moral instruction, and in making the most valuable improvements in the judicial system. It is the peculiar and distinguishing character of your administration that it was conducted on those principles which enabled you to accomplish the intentions and views of her Majesty's Government and the British nation, not merely without the opposition, but with the active concurrence of the people whom you governed, and that whilst it secured you their grateful affection, it merited and received the high approbation of your Sovereign.

The influence of those qualities which enabled you to render such important services is not confined to the age or country in which they are exercised. Your administration will furnish the principles on which the Government of Jamaica, and not of Jamaica alone, but of every other colony, must and will ever hereafter be administered. But the people of Jamaica will not only retain a grateful admiration of your Government—they will dwell with affectionate gratitude and esteem on your Christian charity, ever largely exercised in alleviating individual distress—on your kindness and condescension in private life, and on your munificent support of all their religious and charitable institutions, and of every undertaking which could promote the prosperity and happiness of the colony.

We beg to assure you that we shall ever regard with sentiments of the most heartfelt gratitude your administration of the Government of Jamaica—that we shall ever feel the highest esteem and respect for your exalted character, and

that your welfare and happiness will ever continue to be the objects of our affectionate solicitude.

SIR CHARLES METCALFE'S REPLY.

I am deeply sensible of the honour conferred on me by this proceeding. To find my services in Jamaica so highly appreciated by those in this country who are interested in that colony, cannot fail to be a source of exceeding gratification. I have not, however, the presumption to attribute this distinguished reception, with which you have greeted my arrival in England, to any claims on my part. It proceeds from the same generous feeling which has prevailed in Jamaica, and cheered me throughout my residence in that beautiful island. In ascribing beneficial effects to my administration, more credit is given to me than I deserve, and less to our fellow-subjects in the colony than is their due. Charged by her Majesty's Government with a mission of peace and reconciliation, I was received in Jamaica with open arms, and the duties which I had to perform were obvious. My first proceedings were naturally watched with anxiety; but as they indicated good-will and a fair spirit, I obtained hearty support and co-operation. The views of her Majesty's Government were adopted and carried into effect even at great cost to the island; and the unavoidable losses and vexations caused by the altered state of the relations between employers and labourers were borne with exemplary patience. My task in acting along with the spirit which animated the colony was easy. Internal differences were adjusted either by being left to the natural progress of affairs, during which the respective parties were enabled to apprehend their real interests, or by mild endeavours to promote harmony and discourage dissension. The loyalty, the good sense, and good feeling of the colony, did everything.

I confidently expect that the support which the government of my successor will receive from our brethren in Jamaica will confirm the correctness of my opinion, that to them is chiefly due the credit of any good that my administration may have effected, although all have generously joined in ascribing that result to me. I beg you to accept my warmest thanks for your kindness, on the recollection of which I shall ever dwell with pride and gratitude.

ADDRESS OF THE GORE COUNCILLORS.

(Page 273.)

To his Excellency the Right Honourable Sir Charles Metcalfe, Governor-General of British North America, &c. &c. &c.

May it please your Excellency,—We, the undersigned Warden and Councillors of the Gore District, not in District Council assembled, but leave to approach your Excellency, in the present exigency of our public affairs, with sentiments of the highest respect and esteem towards your Excellency, and with feelings of the most ardent attachment to her Majesty's person and Government, and with the most lively sense of the important duty we owe to our Sovereign in using every endeavour to perpetuate in bonds of an enduring attachment the union happily existing between this colony and the great empire of which it forms a part.

Knowing the high and honourable reputation your Excellency has sustained as a statesman, and as a wise, liberal, and enlightened Governor in other parts of her Majesty's dominions, we are led to believe, that your Excellency has been misled and misinformed, by irresponsible and unconstitutional advisers, in regard to the true state of public opinion upon that great and important constitutional principle of Government involved in the question which led to the resignation of the late Executive Council. We therefore, humbly assure your Excellency, representing as we do various townships in this district, and being intimately acquainted with the views, feelings, and wishes of the several constituencies we have the honour to represent, that public opinion in this district, and we believe, throughout the length and breadth of Canada, will fully sustain the late Executive in the stand they have taken, and the views they have expressed, in relation to colonial administration under the principle of Responsible Government, as emanated and set forth in the resolutions of the Assembly of September, 1841, and practically carried into operation under your Excellency's late lamented predecessors, Lord Sydenham, and Sir Charles Bagot. The late Executive, we believe, has taken their stand on the plainly defined and easily understood principles of the British constitution; and we beg to assure your Excellency that nothing can so much secure and advance the great public interests of this large province, or promote public peace and tranquillity, as well as strengthen the loyalty and attachment of the people to the Crown of Great Britain, as a full participation in

all the rights and privileges of Britons, in a perfect recognition in the administration of our affairs of that principle—the responsibility of the Ministers of the Crown to the representatives of the people.

In the absence from your Excellency of constitutional advisers we submit this address, believing that your Excellency only requires to know the true state of public opinion, and the real feelings of the country, to carry out the gracious declaration of her Majesty of her wish and determination that the government in Canada should be administered according to the well-understood wishes and interests of the people.

SIR CHARLES METCALFE'S REPLY.

To the Warden and Councillors of the Gore District.

I receive, gentlemen, with great satisfaction the assurance of your attachment to her Majesty's person and Government, and of your desire to perpetuate the union happily existing between this colony and the great empire of which it forms a part; and I thank you for your courteous expression of personal regard towards myself.

Before I reply to the substance of your address, I must endeavour to remove some erroneous impressions by which it seems to have been dictated.

You suppose me to have been misled by certain imaginary beings, whom you designate as irresponsible and unconstitutional advisers. I am not aware of their existence.

You offer me your opinions in the absence from me, as you say, of constitutional advisers, whereas I have them in the Executive Council.

You speak of the resolutions of September, 1841, as having been exclusively carried into operation under my lamented predecessors; but in no administration have they been so thoroughly carried into operation as in mine.

The substance of your address relates to the resignation of certain members of the late Executive Council, and to the question of Responsible Government, which you conceive to be involved in this proceeding.

The resignation of those gentlemen proceeded from my refusing to agree to certain stipulations which it was unconstitutional for them to demand, and a compliance with which was impossible on my part, as in my judgment it would have involved a surrender of the patronage of the Crown to them for party purposes, an act

to which I could never agree. In no other respect was the question of Responsible Government involved in their resignation.

With reference to your views of Responsible Government, I cannot tell you how far I concur in them without knowing your meaning, which is not distinctly stated.

If you mean that the Governor is to have no exercise of his own judgment in the administration of the government, and is to be a mere tool in the hands of the Council, then I totally disagree with you. That is a condition to which I can never submit, and which her Majesty's Government, in my opinion, never can sanction.

If you mean that every word and deed of the Governor is to be previously submitted for the advice of the Council, then you propose what, besides being unnecessary and useless, is utterly impossible consistently with the due despatch of business.

If you mean that the patronage of the Crown is to be surrendered for exclusive party purposes to the Council, instead of being distributed to reward merit, to meet just claims, and to promote the efficiency of the public service, then we are again at issue. Such a surrender of the prerogative of the Crown is, in my opinion, incompatible with the existence of a British Colony.

If you mean that the Governor is an irresponsible officer, who can without responsibility adopt the advice of the Council, then you are, I conceive, entirely in error. The undisputed functions of the Governor are such, that he is not only one of the hardest worked servants of the colony, but also has more responsibilities than any other officer in it. He is responsible to the Crown and the Parliament and the people of the mother country for every act that he performs or suffers to be done, whether it originates with himself or is adopted on the advice of others. He could not divest himself of that responsibility by pleading the advice of the Council. He is also virtually responsible to the people of this colony, and practically more so than even to the mother country. Every day proves it; and no resolutions can make it otherwise.

But if instead of meaning any of the above-stated impossibilities you mean that the government should be administered according to the well-understood wishes and interests of the people; that the resolutions of September, 1841, should be faithfully adhered to; that it should be competent to the Council to offer advice on all occasions, whether as to patronage or otherwise; and that the Governor should receive it with the attention due to his constitutional advisers, and consult with them in all cases of

adequate importance; that there should be a cordial co-operation and sympathy between him and them; that the Council should be responsible to the Provincial Parliament and the people; and that when the acts of the Governor are such as they do not choose to be responsible for, they should be at liberty to resign; then I entirely agree with you, and see no impracticability in carrying on Responsible Government in a colony on this footing; provided that the respective parties engaged in the undertaking be guided by moderation, honest purpose, common sense, and equitable minds devoid of party spirit.

As you have considerately tendered to me your advice in the supposition that I stood in need of it, I trust that I may, without offence, offer some counsel in return.

You have all the essentials of Responsible Government. Keep it. Cling to it. Do not throw it away by grasping at impossibilities. Do not lose the substance by snatching at a shadow.

You desire to perpetuate your union with the British Empire. Do not imagine that this purpose can be promoted by obstructing her Majesty's Government, in order to reduce its authority to a nullity. You have every privilege freely granted that is compatible with the maintenance of that union. Her Majesty's Government has no inclination to exercise any unnecessary interference in your local affairs; but can never consent to the prostration of the honour and dignity of the Crown; and I cannot be the traitor that would sign the death-warrant of British connection.

Cherish Responsible Government and British connection. Let them work together in harmony and unison in a practicable manner. Let no man put them asunder. But do not pursue a course that must destroy one or the other, or both. This advice is offered with perfect sincerity by a friend whose only interest in the counsel that he gives is an anxious desire to secure the welfare of Canada and the integrity of the British Empire.

THE END.

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